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THE YEAR OF THE CHURCH



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THE
YEAR OF THE CHURCH:

HYMNS AND DEVOTIONAL VERSE

FOR THE SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS

OF THE

Ecclesiastical Year;

WITH BRIEF EXPLANATIONS OF THEIR

ORIGIN AND DESIGN.

✓
BY THE REV. C. M. BUTLER.

UTICA:
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1839.



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TO MY FATHER,

THE REV. DAVID BUTLER, D.D.,

THIS LITTLE WORK IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

IN dedicating this little work to you, my dear father, I take this method of prefacing it with all I have to say of its origin and aim. It originated in a season of leisure, when ill health had obliged me for a time to relinquish the charge of a parish. Its aim was to furnish for the younger mind, and less matured Christian experience of the religious public, some such exhibition of "The Year of the Church," in connection with the devotional feelings and reflections it is well calculated to excite, as Keble has provided for the highest intellect and the ripest piety. I entertained the hope, too, that such a work might convey a general knowledge of the beautiful order of our church, in connection with its spiritual privileges, to some who would not be likely to consult larger works of a different character. In carrying this plan into effect, though I soon found myself wandering, in some measure, from my original design (which may be traced in the first few pages) of giving to all the pieces a character strictly adapted to the young, I still endeavored to attain such simplicity of sentiment and expression as would fit it for its intended purpose,

IV.

Such was the humble object, my dear father, which I had in view in occupying a few leisure months in the composition of this little volume. I am the more anxious to explain it, lest it should, for a moment, seem to any that I attempt, with my unpracticed and humble lyre, to rival the rich harpings of him who has so loftily and sweetly sung the "Christian Year." If it should prove unfitted for its end, I know that you, at least, will look leniently on any attempt, however humble, to promote the cause of piety through the order of that church for which you have so long and faithfully labored. In that event, I can still look back gratefully upon the pleasant labor of its composition, and have at least the satisfaction of feeling, that in having sunken into the deep, it will have left no taint upon the waters.

The short notices of the days as they occur have been taken chiefly from Bishop Hobart's "Festivals and Fasts," with slight additions and alterations, and from the "Tract of the Seasons," by the Rev. Dr. Rudd, who kindly encouraged me in the prosecution of the work. I am indebted to the Rev. Dr. Hale for the following letter, which forms an appropriate introduction to the work, and which he has kindly allowed me to use for that purpose.

Your affectionate son,

C. M. B.

Palmyra, February, 1839.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

I have examined several of the sheets of your little work, which you have been so kind as to send me, not so much with the eye of a critic, as with the feelings of one who has had cause to think much of the religious education of the young, and to whom every thing that tends to the promotion of early piety is dear. The spirit of your book is excellent, and I have no doubt the plan of it will find acceptance with many readers, and your songs be blest to the nourishing of many young hearts to everlasting life.

I have long thought that sacred poetry, simple in sentiment, addressing the ear in a sweet harmony, and the fancy by a graceful management of the figurative language of holy scripture, affords one of the best means of cherishing the sentiments of piety in the minds of the young. And I have known it since I have had occasion to see some of the beautiful Hymns of our Prayer Book, which had been treasured in the memory of a child, but just past the first decade of her years, becoming in her last sickness an abundant source of joy and consolation, and furnishing her with the means of expressing her feelings to her friends and her devotions to her Maker and Redeemer.

It is far from being a matter of indifference that the style of poetry for children should be graceful. Their memories are

clogged, and their hearts but little benefitted by much that is set forth for their use. A child of vivacious intellect has a quick feeling of the graces of poetry, when the sentiment is not beyond its reach, and rejoices in a perfect harmony. The religious instruction of children by the fireside, in every truly Christian household, makes the history and the parables and the general language of scripture, early familiar, and gives great advantage to the religious poet in adapting his compositions to their use. By following the leading of some passage of scripture for the day, you have availed yourself of this, and if I mistake not, in many of your hymns, with much success.

To my apprehension, it is not of small moment to teach the young of our communion, as your book intends, to follow with interest the revolution of our ecclesiastical year. Let times as well as places be adorned with hallowed associations, and days, as well as material objects and localities, teach lessons of piety. The order of our church in this, as in other respects, is greatly helpful to Christian education, as well as to mature piety; and if children were carefully trained, as the church expects from parents and sponsors, after she has received them "into the congregation of Christ's flock," and according to the means and the order which she has furnished, systematically and constantly, mature piety would be much more abundant.

Wishing your pious labors success in this great object,

I am, dear sir,

Your friend and brother,

BENJ. HALE.

Geneva, February 1, 1839.

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YEAR OF THE CHURCH.

WELL to celebrate these religious and sacred days, is to spend the flower of our time happily. They are the splendour and outward dignity of our religion, forcible witnesses of ancient truth, provocations to the exercises of all piety, shadows of our endless felicities in heaven, on earth everlasting records and memorials wherein they which cannot be drawn to hearken to what we teach, may only by looking into that we do, in a manner read whatsoever we believe.

Hooker's Eccl. Polity, Lib. 5, Sec. 71.

M O R N I N G .

THE pearly light of morning breaks,
And nature from her sleep awakes ;
The birds have left the forests dim
And raise to heaven their early hymn ;
Man to his labour goeth forth
And, happy life fills all the earth ;—
And ere I tread life's dangerous ways
I'll lift to heaven my prayer and praise.

I praise thee, God ! that thou hast given
This pleasant earth, yon glorious heaven ;
For life, for health, for food, for friends,
My soul to thee in praise ascends :
For mind to think, and heart to feel,
For all my woe, and all my weal :
But my chief praise, Oh God, I give,
That thou, through CHRIST, hast bid me live.

My prayer I breathe on bended knee,
Before thine awful Majesty :
My sins, my frailties, I confess,
And CHRIST is all "my righteousness :"
Give me to love thee more and more ;
Thy slighted grace in me restore ;
And by my life let proof be given
My "conversation is in heaven."

Let me not grieve, oh Lord! this day,
Thy holy spirit quite away ;
Oh, keep me, though my heart be stung,
From angry thought and bitter tongue ;
The sin that doth me most beset,
Oh, let it not the mastery get ;
So that no cherished wilful sin,
May creep this day my heart within.

EVENING.

TRANQUILLY doth evening come
In sober guise, but not in gloom.
She makes men pause in life's wild chase,
And wear a chasten'd reverent face.
E'en children check their frolic play
And their wild glee all dies away ;
And you may see them watch eve's star,
As if their thoughts were wandering far.

As falls on earth the dew of even,
So on man's heart the grace of heaven.
Solemn and tranquil in its power,
'T is like that bless'd and holy hour :
It dims the bright world to our view,
And clothes it in a soberer hue ;
But as that fades upon the eye,
More glorious glows the star-paved sky.

THE
YEAR OF THE CHURCH.

ADVENT.

ADVENT SUNDAYS are the four Sundays that precede the great festival of our Saviour's Nativity. It is the season appointed by the church to prepare our minds, by proper meditations, for a due commemoration of Christ's coming in the flesh.

The first Sunday in Advent is always the nearest Sunday to the feast of St. Andrew, whether before or after ; and this festival falls on the 30th of November.

The subjects presented in the services of the church, during this season, relate chiefly to the *coming* — as the word Advent implies — of our Lord and Saviour. There are usually noted two Advents :

That of JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Son of God, in human flesh, is the *first*: His *second* Advent is that when he will come as Judge of the world.

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

21st chapter of St. Matthew. The Gospel for the day.

WHEN JESUS, at the close of day,
His course towards the city bent,
The crowd spread garments in his way,
And all the air with shoutings rent.
And when he reached the Temple-hill,
The children caught the eager shout,
And "to the Son of David" still
Their glad hosannas echoed out!

But to the Temple then in wrath,
And with a lashing scourge he came;
A better Temple now he hath,
Wherein is praised his holy name.
That house was then accursed of God,
Because so long defiled by sin;
And soon 't was level'd with the sod—
His Temple yet he dwelleth in!

His Church that better Temple is,
Which his own precious blood hath bought;

'The house of God, the gate of bliss,
 With purer light and "glory"* fraught.
 There crowds come up for praise and prayer;
 And there all bloody offerings cease;
 The Holy Spirit broodeth there,
 And there he gives his hallow'd "peace."

And now let children gather here,
 And with their glad hosannahs greet
 Their victor King, their Saviour dear,
 And cast their branches at his feet.
 Though sneering men their zeal decry,
 And fain would drown the song they raise:
 Yet JESUS loves to hear that cry,
 And says that such make perfect praise.†

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE JUDGMENT.

AND then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud,
 with power and great glory.—[Mat. xxi: 28.] Gospel for the day.

HARK! Do you hear this awful truth?

Do you not tremble as you hear?

And will you yet, presumptuous Youth!

Listen and linger without fear?

* The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord of hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.—[HAGGAI, ii: 9.]

† Mat. xxi: 16.

Is it not true ? Hath not God said ?

Oh, then to **CHRIST** your Saviour flee,
That so his second Advent dread,
Be not the day of doom to thee !

Once did he come in humble love,
And bleed and die to save your soul ;
But now, in Judgment from above,
He comes in clouds that round him roll.

Look up ! look up ! if careless yet,
Then look to tremble and despair ;
For soon shall be the Judgment set,
And **CHRIST** shall meet thee sternly there.

But oh, if thou wilt turn and pray,
If thou wilt all thy sins confess,
And enter on the narrow way,
And strive for faith and holiness ;

Then upward look with joy and hope,
For "thy redemption draweth nigh ;"
The radiant ranks of Angels ope
To hail and welcome thee on high !

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

And he shall wipe away all tears from all faces.—[Isaiah xxv :

8. First Lesson in the morning.

I CARE not how young or how merry you are,
Or whether you play in life's pleasantest places ;
How free you may seem from all trouble and care,
I know there 've been tears upon all of your faces.

The hot tear of anger that burned as it fell ;
Disappointment's first tear, which of all is most
bitter ;
And pride's suppressed tear, which at least would
outswell,
And pity's mild tear, with its soft dewy glitter.

Now, would you not love such a scene of pure bliss,
Where joy after joy through the heart ever chases,
In a world that hath nothing of sorrow like this,
Where God wipes the tear-drops away from all
faces ?

Then turn unto him who the penitent tear
By the sweet one of gratitude kindly replaces ;
And who, if he let us weep sometimes while here,
Will keep off all tears from all heavenly faces.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

He said I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as saith the prophet Isaiah.—[St. John i: 23.] Gospel for the day.

WHEN eastern monarchs march abroad
Their slaves prepare an even road ;
And in the desert voices ring,
“Prepare a pathway for our king.”

Then busy hands the way prepare,
And smooth and straighten it with care ;
That o’er it thus the king may ride,
In unobstructed pomp and pride.

A glorious King our Saviour is ;—
King of the realms of heavenly bliss ;
And he, before his mortal birth,
His herald sent upon the earth.

The Baptist came — his thrilling word,
“Prepare the way,” afar was heard ;
And to the ears of all he sent
The ceaseless warning cry, “Repent” !

Behold your King approaches nigh,
Descending from his throne on high !

Within your hearts prepare his path,
Or wait the blightings of his wrath.

Thrice happy they whose early care
It is that pathway to prepare ;
Before those hills are hard and high,
Or dim and deep those valleys lie ;

Before deceit and sin embraced,
Their dark and winding ways have traced ;
And while the heart can yet relent,
Oh ! heed the herald's cry, " Repent " !

ST. ANDREW'S DAY—Nov. 30.

ST. ANDREW was born at Bethsaida,* a city of Gallilee ; was son to Jonah, a fisherman of that town, and was brother to Simon Peter.

As St. Andrew was the first who found the Messiah,† and the first who brought others to him, the church commemorates him first in her anniversary course of holy days, placing his festival at the beginning of Advent, as the most proper to bring the news of our Saviour's coming.

* Jno. i: 44.

† Jno. i: 38, 39, &c.

The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, God hath made even both of them.—[Prov. xx: 12.] First Lesson.

WITH brightness and beauty God clothes the earth,
And fills it with voices of joy and mirth ;
And for his pleasure doth man supply
With “ the hearing ear and seeing eye.”

Bless'd are the sights for the “ seeing eye,”
On the glad green earth, in the glorious sky ;
And the daily music of life, how dear,
From voices of love to the hearing ear !

But to look on the Saviour is better, far,
Than to look on earth, or sun, or star ;
Than all the sounds which our hearts rejoice,
’T is better to hear and obey his voice.

Like the humble Andrew, may we leave all,
And turn us at once to the Saviour’s call ;
And when all else fades as our eye grows dim,
Brighter and nearer we shall still see him.

ST. THOMAS—DEC. 21.

ST. THOMAS, whose sur-name was DIDYMUS, was a Jew, and probably a Galilean ; and it is very likely he was brought up a fisherman.*

St. Thomas, though at first unbelieving, was at length convinced of our Lord's Resurrection, by the greatest possible evidence ; and this evidence the church recommends as a fit preparative to our Lord's nativity, to incline us to believe with St. Thomas — that the CHRIST whose birth we are to commemorate, is the very CHRIST ; or in the words of St. Thomas, our LORD and our God.

Buy the truth.—[Prov. xxiii: 23.] First Lesson for the day.

Oh buy the truth ! more precious far
Than gold, or pearls, or gems ;
More than the splendid spoils of war,
Or burning diadems.
Buy it with the price of thought,
Of earnest toil and care ;
Be it with self-denial bought,
With meekness and with prayer.

And buy it in thy early youth,
While yet thy heart is pure,

* Jno. xxi: 2, 3,

Ere cherished sin hath made the truth
More than thou canst endure.

Buy it ere yet long-cherished vice
Bears o'er thy spirit sway,
And makes it of a greater price
Than thou canst ever pay.

What is truth? And dost thou ask
As careless Pilate did?
To reach it must thy spirit task;
'Tis to the heedless hid!
Wilt thou with doubting Thomas turn
Thy cold and sceptic eye,
Where radiant truths before thee burn,
And count them all a lie?

The truth — the awful truth — is this,
That 'neath God's curse we lie
Condemn'd to bitter agonies,
To *wo eternally*!

The truth — the blessed truth — it is
That CHRIST averts the rod;
And they shall reap felicities,
Who hail him, LORD and GOD!*

* Then said he to Thomas, reach forth thy finger and behold my hands; and reach forth thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered him and said, My Lord and my God!—[Jno. xx: 27, 28.]

CHRISTMAS DAY.

THIS festival has been observed with lively interest and joy by the great body of the Christian world from the earliest times of the Church of CHRIST. The precise day upon which the Saviour was born is not agreed upon by the learned ; neither is it material to know. It is enough to know that JESUS lived, grew, and died as other men. Those who saw him in the days of his sojourn upon earth, beheld him as the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth. It is proper that a day should be set apart for celebrating with gratitude and devotion so blessed an event as the Saviour's nativity.

Connected with this glorious festival, is the custom of decorating our churches with boughs of evergreens. This practice is in conformity to the customs of many nations, and has prevailed for ages in the Christian Church, as an appropriate emblem of that everlasting freshness which is to accompany the immortal joy and youth of Heaven.

On Bethlehem's plain deeply hushed is the night,
And the stars in their stillness are shining ;
And watching their flocks by the dubious light,
The shepherds in peace are reclining.

No heave of the earth, no flash of the sky,
Proclaim it an hour of such wonder :
No tokens are seen that Messiah is nigh ;
No voices, nor lightning, nor thunder !

But look ! on the Heaven a glory appears :
Its lustre to every thing lending ;
And o'er them they see, with tremulous fears,
The wings of an angel descending !

But mild was his look as the light of his wing,
And kind were the words by him spoken ;
And "fear not," he said, "glad tidings I bring,
Confirmed by a marvellous token."

"Messiah, your Lord and your Saviour, is born
In the city of David — go greet him :
Wrapp'd in his swadling clothes, lowly and lorn ;
A babe in a manger you'll meet him !"

Bright was the light that then flashed o'er the sky
As thousands of angels descended ;
And sweet was the anthem that rose up on high,
As their voices in melody blended !

That anthem shall yet through the universe ring ;
'Twill be chanted for ever in Heaven :
'Glory to God in the highest," they sing,
"Peace and good will to mortals be given !" *

* St. Luke ii: 14.

ST. STEPHENS'S DAY.

ST. STEPHEN, who was a Jew, and probably one of the seventy disciples, is described in Scripture as a man "full of faith and the Holy Ghost."

For placing the festivals of St. Stephen, St. John, and the Holy Innocents immediately after Christmas, the following reason among others has been assigned: that St. Stephen was the first who suffered martyrdom; St. John was the disciple whom JESUS loved; and the slaughter of the Holy Innocents was the first considerable consequence of our Saviour's birth. Thus martyrdom, love, and innocence, are first magnified as things wherein CHRIST is most honored.

When holy Stephen raised his eye,
And looked on Heaven steadfastly,
It brightened to his view;
He saw its inner glories shine —
He saw his Saviour's form divine,
The op'ning vista through!

And now, himself before the throne,
Brightest and foremost there is known
Of all the martyr's train,
Who have, for CHRIST, from age to age,

Defied the foe's most cruel rage,
And poured their blood like rain !

Before his death the Spirit's grace
Gave angel beauty to his face,
When to the council brought ; *
Before his martyrdom, 't was his
To gaze on Heaven's felicities,
With faith so fervent fraught !

Not that his life for CHRIST was given,
Was he led crown'd and bless'd to Heaven,
And welcom'd warmly in ; —
That indeed might serve to get
A less, though radiant coronet, †
But not the crown to win.

It is because the Spirit's dove
Made in his heart its home of love, ‡

* Acts vi: 15.

† " They say who know the life divine,
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,
That by each golden crown on high,
Rich with celestial jewelry ;
Which for our Lord's redeemed is set,
There hangs a radiant coronet —
All gemm'd with pure and living light :
Prepared for virgin souls, and them
Who seek to wear a martyr's diadem."

Keble's Christian Year, p. 136.

‡ " Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." —
Acts vi: 5.

He has a bliss so large ;
Because, like CHRIST, he prayed to Heaven
His murderers' guilt might be forgiven,
And laid not to their charge.*

Wilt thou to us, oh gracious LORD,
Thy Spirit's blessed power afford,
To win a faith like his ?
A faith whose ever upward eye
Sees CHRIST beyond the open sky,
And blesses enemies !

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

ST. JOHN was a Gallilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, and younger brother to St. James, with whom he was brought up in the trade of fishing, and with whom he was called to be a disciple and an apostle of our Saviour. He is thought to have been the youngest of all the Apostles, being thirty years old when he was called to that dignity. As he died about an hundred years old, in the third year of Trajan, he must have lived about seventy

* " And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice : Lord, lay not this sin to their charge ! And when he said this he fell asleep.—[Acts vii: 60.]

years after our Saviour's sufferings ; and consequently must have been very young when called to the Apostleship.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved."—[Jno. xxi: 20.]

'T is enough to know of thee,
That by our Lord approved,
Thy name shall ever honored be
As one whom "JESUS loved."

We know that thou wert pure and mild,
By gentle feelings moved ;
And guileless as a little child,
Because by "JESUS loved."

Thy soul yet lives upon thy page ; *
Thy life most brightly proved
That thou, alike in youth and age †
Wert one whom "JESUS loved."

* *Love* is the great lesson inculcated in the Epistles of St. John.

† When he was too infirm through age to make a longer discourse, his constant exhortations to the Christians at Ephesus, where he lived, was, "Little children love one another."

THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

THE Third day after Christmas is devoted by the Church to a notice of those little ones who were slain by the order of Herod ; who feared the birth of CHRIST would destroy his power.

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying : ‘ In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and great weeping : Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not’.”—[Mat. ii: 17, 18.]

In Bethlehem was heard a cry —

Voices of wo and wailing —

Whose mingled dirge rose mournfully,

With sorrow unavailing.

’T is very sad to bid farewell

To fathers, sisters, brothers ;

But the deep grief, oh ! who may tell,

That wrings bereaved mothers ?

Well may Bethlehem’s mothers weep ;

Well may their hearts be breaking,

For now their dear babes sleep the sleep

That hath on earth no waking.

No more shall they again awake

From rosy slumber, smiling,

And into gladsome prattle break —

The hearts of all beguiling.

To take the stars away from heaven,
And leave it all in sadness --
To take from earth the bright flowers given
To lend it joy and gladness.
To take, when all with music rife,
The birds from out the wildwood ;
Oh such it is to take from life
Bright, happy, laughing childhood !

But they are now bright flowers above --
To Paradise transplanted ;
And blooming in a soil of love,
Where constant sunshine 's granted.
Yes, they are bless'd and radiant now,
In green and tranquil places :
Eternal glory on their brow --
Smiles ever on their faces.

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

“ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, saying Abba, Father.”—[Gal. iv: 6.]—
Epistle for the day.

AND wilt thou, high and mighty one,
Call me thy sinful child, a *son* ?
And may we thus look up to thee,
Inhabiting eternity,

And by the power upholding all,
And by the name of *Father* call ?

Then I'll not fear ! my Father's eye
Is ever wakeful in the sky :
Come joy, it is my Father's gift ;
To him my soul in praise I'll lift ;
Come wo, it is his warning given,
To keep me in the path to Heaven !

Oh then, in trial's sternest hour,
'Neath sorrow's, darkest, bitterest power,
When left by all the world beside,
On my wrecked bark alone I ride —
I'll lift my trusting eye above,
And know my Father still "is love !"

THE CIRCUMCISION—JAN. 1.

THE next festival is this, in which the Church commemorates the initiation of our Lord into the Jewish Church : for as he came to fulfil the whole law, it was proper for him to obey that which required that every son should be circumcised. As the Jewish laws were to be done away, JESUS established in the place of circumcision that ordinance

of baptism by which every child should be introduced into covenant relation with God. As circumcision was administered eight days after the birth of a child, so this festival falls eight days after Christmas, which is New Year's day.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."
[Romans iv: 8.] Epistle for the day.

When o'er the past I cast my eye,
How bitter is the memory!
I mourn my mispent, precious hours,
My lavished strength, my wasted powers;
I mourn the foolishness and sin,
That made their home my heart within —
Then is indeed this truth confess'd,
"Whom God *counts* sinless, they are blest!"

And when the present hour I mark,
And see my heart so cold and dark —
So thankless for all blessings given,
So little fixed on God and Heaven;
So slowly moving on its way,
Towards the bright and perfect day —
Oh then on this dear truth I rest,
"Whom God *counts* sinless, they are blest!"

When to the future, too, I look,
'Tis not to me a sealed book —

I know 'twill be a scroll of sin,
Darkly written without and in ;
A gloomy list of sins and tears,
Shall darken all the coming years ;
Therefore this truth I seize with zest,
" Whom God counts sinless, they are blest ! "

For 'mid the angel ranks above,
Whose breath is bliss, whose life is love,
Shall ransom'd men forever be,
And share their full felicity.
How do they shun thy realms despair ?
How came they 'mid the sinless there ?
Who buys for them their heavenly rest ?
" Christ bore their sins, and they are blest ! "

EPIPHANY — JANUARY 6.

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

THE word Epiphany means manifestation ; and the Church on this day celebrates that event in the life of our LORD, in which he was manifested to the Gentiles through the persons of those wise men of the East, who came by the guidance of a miraculous star to Bethlehem, to worship the infant Redeemer.

“In the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, where is he who was born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and am come to worship him.”—[St. Mat. ii: 62.

Behold in Heaven yon stranger star!
Chaldea's sages know it not—
It leads the wise men from afar,
Towards a rude, but hallowed spot:
A spot where uttering feeble cries,
The Saviour in a manger lies.

With joy exceeding great they greet
The Mighty One, so long foretold,
And lay rich treasures at his feet,
Of myrrh, and frankincense, and gold;
And there that weak, unhonored thing,
They hail and welcome as a king.

He is king! and mightier far
Than the proud monarchs of the earth!
Well might one bright and guiding star
Give token of his humble birth,
Who all the stars on high arrayed,
And all the worlds from nothing made.

O'er distant riches, power and fame,
A brilliant star seems hung on high;
And towards its bright alluring flame,

Earth's crowds are pressing eagerly —
And still it lures them on and on,
But never stops o'er blessings won !

Oh let us turn from them away,
And like the wise men lowly fall
Before our LORD, and humbly lay
Our offered hearts, our lives, our all :
Be ours the star that guided them,
The blessed star of Bethlehem !

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE AMONG THE DOCTORS.

"And it came to pass that after three days they found him in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.—[St. Luke ii: 46.] Gospel for the day.

BEHOLD him there !
The stripling youth amid the doctors standing,
With modest mien that hath a power commanding,
And solemn air !

The holy law —
Its hidden meanings and its types unfolding —
He reads with such deep skill, that all beholding
Are struck with awe.

The aged men,
 The hoary wise ones, laden with all learning,
 Rabbi and Scribe, their souls at his words burning,
 Felt ignorant then.

Did he then speak [dying ?
 Of CHRIST, the mocked, the stoned, the pierced, the
 Spake he the curse on the doomed city lying,
 And soon to break ?

No words are given !
 We know they wondered at the wisdom spoken,
 As if an angel in their midst had broken,
 And talked of Heaven.

Oh what a sight ! [flowing ;
 While gracious words from his young lips were
 His face like Moses on the mount was glowing
 With love and light.

So *we* shall hear,
 When in the house not made with hands eternal,
 His blessed words, with power and grace supernal
 Charming the ear.

Then will he show
 The secret meanings of his doings hidden ;
 Then shall the mists from off his words be bidden,
 And we shall *know* !

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE HERALDS OF GOOD TIDINGS.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.”—[Is. lii: 7.] First Evening Lesson.

THE heralds of the word,
 With tidings of salvation,
 Proclaiming CHRIST their Lord,
 From nation unto nation ;
 Oh beautiful their feet
 Upon the dreary mountains ;
 Their words of peace, oh sweet
 As desert-glad'ning fountains !

“Here 's freedom for the slave ;
 Here 's light for the benighted ;
 Here 's power and will to save,
 Though GOD has long been slighted :
 Here 's balm for wounded hearts,
 Cure for the soul's diseases ;
 A grace which health imparts,
 And direst anguish eases !”

In hours of bright success
 They teach us to be humble,
 And kindly cheer and bless

The feeble ones who stumble.
 They 're ministers of peace
 By beds of wo and wailing,
 And bid all terrors cease,
 When nature fast is failing.

Oh! in thy day of youth,
 While yet thy heart is tender,
 Heed well these words of truth,
 To CHRIST thy soul surrender!
 They 're words of deepest love
 Which God himself has given:
 They point the path above,
 They ope the gate of Heaven!

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; come buy wine and milk, without money and without price."—[Is. lv: 1.] Last Evening Lesson.

WANDERER o'er life's weary way,
 Fainting 'neath the burning day,
 Worn and thirsty in the waste,
 To the gushing waters haste:

In your hand no money bring —
 Hasten to the living spring,
 And o'er its fresh and mossy brink,
 Stoop thee down and freely drink.

Pleasant to the burning lip,
 Lingering there to slowly sip :
 Pleasant is the limpid flow,
 With a sweet voice murmuring low :
 Pleasant, too, the dewy moss,
 That doth all its brim emboss —
 E'en its pebbles you will hold
 Dearer than the finest gold !

Trees, that wave in beauty green ;
 Grass, that grows with freshest sheen ;
 Flowers, with rich and varied dyes,
 Scarcely dim from Paradise !
 Songs that reach the charmed ear,
 Echoes from a higher sphere —
 While you there do gladly sit,
 What a heaven they make of it !

In life's dry and barren waste,
 Such a flowing fount is plac'd ;
 To the faint and thirsting heart,
 Such a draught it will impart : —

God's own word that fountain is,
 Source of all felicities.
 Fly to where those waters burst !—
 They who drink shall never thirst.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

"A house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."—[2d
 Corin. v : 1.] Second Evening Lesson.

THE earth is full of lovely things—
 Visions and shapes of light—
 Grasplest, but dear, and borne on wings,
 How fleet and bright!

Love, as it is not born of earth,
 Not long may bide its breath,
 And as we gladden o'er its birth,
 Behold its death!

And friendship,—as Narcissus strove
 His mirror'd form to clasp,
 Young hearts their own reflected love,
 In vain would grasp.

Hope is the rainbow child of tears,
 Born in life's stormiest sky;

Bright, beautiful, and brief, it rears
Its arch on high.

And pleasure's roseate breath of bloom,
Swells to a storm at last :
A whirlwind winged with wrath and gloom,
A SIROC blast !

All change and pass—grow dim and die :
Earth hath no sure thing given —
Its joys a dream, its hopes a lie ! —
There is a heaven !

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

“ Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any;
even as CHRIST forgave you, so also do ye.—[Col. iii : 13.
Epistle for the day.

BROTHER, when thy soul is stirr'd
By a vile and slanderous word ;
When thy heart is keenly stung,
And with cruel wrong is wrung ;
When by foes thy goods are scatter'd,
And thyself a wreck, art shatter'd,

And thy bitter heart would cry,
 "Curse thy fellow man and die,"
 Be this precept understood,
 "Evil overcome with good."

Brother, look within thy heart ;
 See the sinful thing thou art ;
 Hast thou wronged another never ?
 Has thy heart been loving ever ?
 Hast thou rendered justice even ?
 Needs't thou not to be forgiven ?
 Oh ! as God forgiveth thee,
 Laden with iniquity,
 Show to him thy gratitude —
 "Evil overcome with good."

Brother, thou shalt victory win
 Over more than thine own sin ;
 Thou shalt overcome thy foe,
 Better than by hostile blow,
 And shalt make him to confess
 There's majesty in holiness :
 Wouldst thou gain a glorious crown ?
 Keep thy vengeful passions down ;
 Seekest thou heaven's beatitude ?
 "Evil overcome with good !"

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

"But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ;
for we shall see him as he is."—[1st Jno. iii : 2.] Epistle for
the day.

BE "like" to GOD who sits on high
And filleth up immensity ?
See "as he is" that lofty one
Who makes the universe his throne,
Before whom angel faces bow,
Veiled from his glory's dazzling glow ?

E'en as the light's minutest ray
Is like the glorious GOD of day ;
As the stray drops of ocean foam
Are like the sea from which they come ;
Such likeness may be given us,
To GOD, the great, the glorious !

Waves sleeping neath the glow of even,
Catch splendour from the radiant heaven ;
And our souls basking in the light
That floweth from the Infinite,
May something of its power express
All beautiful in holiness !

Most glorious thought ! like him to be
In love and in felicity ;

To see him, as indeed he is,
Supreme in holiness and bliss :
Oh ! may it unto us impart
Deep yearnings for a purer heart !

THREE SUNDAYS BEFORE LENT.

As the first Sunday in Lent is called *Quadragesima*, being the fortieth day before Easter, the three preceding Sundays were denominated from the next round numbers, *Quinquagesima*, fiftieth ; *Sexagesima*, sixtieth ; and *Septuagesima*, seventieth day before Easter.

The design of the church is now to call off the attention of its members from the more animating and joyous employments of the recent festivals, to a becoming preparation for the better and more spiritual improvement of the humiliating duties of self-examination and penitence and prayer, for the approaching annual fast.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

[Mat. xx.] Gospel for the day.

- “ IDLERS through life’s sunny day,
Spring to labor while ye may :
See how long the shadows fall —
Hasten at this latest call ! ”
- “ Yet a moment in our home,
Then, oh Master, we will come !
Yet at least one parting word,
Then we ’ll join thee, gracious LORD.”
- “ Idly all the day ye ’ve pass’d ;
Heed the call — it is the last !
Ere the gates be closed forever :
Come ye now, or come ye never ! ”
- “ Well we knew thou hadst’a field,
And we meant our toil to yield,
Hoping *thou* wouldst come at last,
And take us ere the day were past.”
- “ But I sent to call ye then,
Apostles, Prophets, holy men ;
See how long the shadows lie —
Speed ye to the gate — or die ! ”

'T is not alone to weary age,
 Ending at length its pilgrimage,
 That CHRIST our LORD doth sternly say,
 "Why are ye idle all the day?"
 To blooming youth and manhood strong,
 The solemn words alike belong :
 Your day may be — God only knows —
 Waning towards its speedy close ;
 And every call in coldness pass'd —
 Most awful thought — may be your last !

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

"The seed is the word of God."—[St. Luke viii: 11.] Gospel
 for the day.

LORD, in the early spring of youth,
 Plant in our hearts the seed of truth ;
 To the cold barren soil be given
 The blessed suns and dews of heaven.

Preserve it, LORD, from trampling feet ;
 Preserve it from the withering heat ;
 Let not the plundering birds destroy,
 Nor choking thorns its growth annoy.

Religion is a tender plant,
 Of earth no native habitant ;

So pale and delicate and fair,
It needs the kindest, gentlest care.

Oh ! keep it from the wintry blast ;
Guard it till the heat be pass'd ;
Keep it from the crushing storm,
From deadly blight and eating worm.

Then shall it grow in heaven above,
By living streams 'mid airs of love ;
Nor blight nor worm nor heat nor storm,
Destroy its fresh immortal form.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

CHARITY.

“ And now abideth faith, hope and charity : these three, and the greatest of these is charity.”—[I. Corin. xiii: 13.] Epistle for the day.

SWEETEST of the sisters three,
Heaven-descended charity !
Upon the dove's soft pinion come,
And make our hearts thy hallow'd home !

Bright faith can fix the drooping eye
Upon the heavens fervently ;
A blessed angel at our side,
She can our faltering footsteps guide.

And gladsome hope with sunny smile
May our dark pilgrimage beguile ;
Make us forget our bleeding feet,
And deserts clothe with blossoms sweet.

Bright visitants of angel birth,
They are the gladdeners of the earth ;
But when they reach the heavenly shore,
They sigh *farewell* — their task is o'er.

For faith and hope are lost in sight,
And in fruition's full delight ;
As stars that shine with midnight ray
Fade in the brilliant blaze of day.

But love — oh LOVE — will enter there,
And breathe her own, her native air ;
'T is this that is designed to be,
Our bosom's bliss eternally.

There God himself is only blest,
Because love fills his holy breast ;
The angel hosts that round him move,
Are only blest because they love.

Sweetest of the sisters three —
Heaven-descended charity ;
Upon the dove's soft pinions come,
And make our hearts thy hallow'd home !

ASH WEDNESDAY.

ASH WEDNESDAY, the first day of LENT, takes its name from the practice of the early Christians who put on sackcloth and other coarse raiment, and put ashes on their heads, in token of their humiliation and sorrow for sin. The word *Lent*, in the Saxon language, means *Spring* ; and hence was applied to the annual fast observed at this season of the year.

From the earliest ages of Christianity it was customary for Christians to set apart some time for mortification and self-denial, to prepare for the solemn feast of *Easter*. The fast of Lent continues forty days, because the number, *forty*, was anciently appropriated for seasons of repentance and humiliation. This is the number of days during which God covered the earth with the deluge ; the number of years in which the children of Israel did penance in the wilderness ; the number of days Moses fasted in the mount, and Elijah in the wilderness ; the Ninevites had this number of days allowed for their repentance ; and our LORD, when he was pleased to fast in the wilderness, observed the same length of time.

Laying before its members the death and sacrifice of CHRIST for the sins of the world, in a series

of services unequalled in impressive solemnity and pathos, the church provides in the fast of *Lent*, a solemn season for regularly calling, with more particular and direct application, upon all men to repent ; and thus avoids the dangers of an unregulated and capricious excitement.

COLLECT FOR ASH WEDNESDAY.

God of mercy and of might,
Pitying all within thy sight,
Hating nothing that hath breath,
Willing not the sinner's death ;
But that he should turn and live—
Oh, do thou our sins forgive ;
Comfort us on whose souls lie
Burdens of iniquity !

To forgive is all thine own ;
Mercy 's with thee ever known ;
Gracious LORD, oh then forbear,
Thy redeemed people spare !
Oh, with us, who are from birth,
Wretched sinners and vile earth,
Meriting an awful lot,
Into judgment enter not !

Turn from us, who now confess
Meekly all our sinfulness,
And our grievous faults repent,
Turn thine angry punishment !
Haste, oh LORD, thy help to give,
While on earth, that we may live
In the world to come, with thee,
Through our LORD, eternally.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

DEATH.

“ For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.”—[Jer. ix: 31.] First Evening Lesson.

GRIM death finds every spot of earth,
And enters every home of love,
And follows darkly after birth,
As shadows with the substance move.
He shatters down strong bars and walls,
And through the windows creeps within ;
And stalking through the palace halls,
Proclaims, “ My reign is wide as sin ! ”

He lurks beneath the blooming flower ;
He glides upon the sun's glad ray ;

He's busy every passing hour ;
He sleepeth not by night or day.
We dance upon his hollow tombs,
And with gay garlands deck our head,
Which borrow all their richest blooms,
From the fat mould where sleep the dead !

And laughing children shriek and start
To see him in their rosy path,
Poising aloft his cruel dart,
And awful in his grisly wrath.
Youth madly cries, "*Not now ! not now !*"
As stealthy death doth toward him steal,
And breathes the fresh bloom off his brow,
And checks his laughter's loudest peal !

And let him in our windows creep ;
And let him in the palace come ;
Let him the unripe harvest reap,
Cutting down youth in all its bloom.
What can he do ? He can but break
The feeble prison-house of clay ;
'The soul from its dark slumbers wake,
And plume its flight for endless day !

Then fear him not ! -- but rather fear
That second death of darker woe,
Whose fatal seeds are planted here,

Which doth no resurrection know !
That awful death was known and wept
By angel-mourners in the skies ; —
A festival by fiends 't is kept ; —
The judgment forms its obsequies !

Nor yet fear *it* — for CHRIST hath led
Captive captivity on high,
And dragged resistless death, now dead,
Chained to his chariot, thro' the sky.
Fear him who hath the power to kill
Body and soul alike in hell ;
But — blessed be GOD ! — the heart can fill
With life and bliss in heaven as well !

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE SPIRIT'S VISITINGS.

In that hour JESUS rejoiced in spirit, and said, " I thank thee, oh Father, LORD of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father ; for so it seemed good in thy sight." —
[St. Luke, x: 21.] Second Lesson for Morning.

THE gentle dew that stealeth down,
Abides not on the lofty tree ;
He shakes it from his lordly crown,
Tossing his head most haughtily.

His roots are deeply fixed in earth ;
His branches shoot out high and wide ;
His green leaves quiver in their mirth ; —
He 's stately in his pomp and pride.

The gentle dew that stealeth down
Finds out an humbler home than this ;
Where falls the forest shadows brown,
And in the common field it is ;
It settles on the lowly grass,
It nestles in the wild flower's cup,
And greets us as we onward pass,
Beaming in smiling beauty up !

And so the gentle spirit's grace
Is shaken from the haughty mind ;
It cannot hold a biding place,
'Neath passion's wild and wayward wind.
Rooted in earth, that mind relies
On earth alone for power and life ;
And lifts its bold front to the skies,
And dares the tempest's sternest strife.

But when the gentle spirit's grace
Falleth on lowly contrite hearts,
It findeth there a resting place,
And there its fresh'ning power imparts.
On humble souls bowed down with wo,

For sin so frequent, dark and dread,
Because they made Christ suffer so,
Freely its blessed dew's are shed.

Even so, FATHER! In thy sight
Which never errs, it seemeth good,
That men of wisdom and of might
Should lose high heaven's beatitude.
Even so, FATHER! for above,
From lowest angels up to thee,
There dwells in every heart, with love,
Her sister, sweet *humility*.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE DEATH OF THE SOUL.

"Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and CHRIST shall give thee light.—[Eph. v: 14.] Epistle for the day.

You 've gazed upon a fair young form
Stretched on the couch of death,
Senseless and still, and almost warm
With recent life and breath.
Still lingers beauty on her face,
As loth to leave its dwelling place;
And still the drooping shroud attests

'The lovely shape that 'neath it rests ;
But her glazed eye's unmeaning stare,
Proclaim that "soul is wanting there!"

So may our fallen nature seem
Most beautiful though dead ;
And with a pallid lustre beam,
Though all its life be fled.
And as of old the dead were crown'd,
And with bright rosy wreaths were bound ;
So may we, in spirit dead,
With fading flowers be garlanded ;
But we must wither fast as they,
And yield us to corruption's sway.

Yes, guilt hath slain us ; we "are dead
In trespasses and sins ;"
Corruption through our spirits spread,
Its gradual progress wins.
Dead to the pleading voice of love ;
Dead to the joys of heaven above ;
Dead to God's threat'nings dark and fell ;
Dead to the agonies of hell ;
Dead to conscience, *dead to death* ;
To calls above — around — beneath !

"Awake ye sleepers ! from the dead,
And CHRIST shall give ye light :"

So hath that awful being said,
Whose word is winged with might.
No matter though your spirit sleep
In dreamless slumber dark and deep ;
No matter though you cannot spring
To life, with self-awakening ;
'Tis CHRIST who calls, whose voice brought forth
The buried Lazarus from the earth.

Ye careless sleepers heed the call !
Awake ! arouse ! arise !
The thrilling summons comes to all,
And comes from out the skies.
CHRIST who came your souls to save,
Sheds a mild brilliance in the grave ;
He bursts the fetters of the tomb ;
He dissipates its fearful gloom ;
And sends his spirit's vital breath,
To warm the cold wan shapes of death !

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

SUFFERINGS FOR JESUS' SAKE.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of CHRIST, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—[Phil. i: 29.]
Second Evening Lesson.

THE blessed JESUS walked the earth,
A sainted sufferer from his birth.
Cold on his infant manger bed,
The weeping dews of night were shed;
And when dawned childhood's brighter day,
His was a rough and narrow way.
But oh! with manhood's sterner strength,
Came wo's full bitterness at length,
Reviled, rejected, crucified,
He bowed his bleeding head and died!

To God's elect high gifts are given.
What are they?—Antepasts of heaven?
Oh! they are gifts we're slow to take;—
Sufferings for his blessed sake!
Oh! they are gifts of greater worth
Than all the joy or wealth of earth.
God knows that every worldly gift
Man's haughty heart in pride will lift;
God knows that he the rock must smite,
Before life's waters leap to light!

Then will we welcome here below
And joy in our *rewarding* wo ;
Then shall our bitterest tears be shed,
That for our sins CHRIST died and bled ;
Nor care, though all our joys grow dim,
So that our sufferings be for HIM.
The storms that beat upon the heart,
A fresher power of life impart ;
The soul ploughed deepest with distress
Bears richest fruits of holiness !

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

“In your patience possess ye your souls.”—[St. Luke xxi: 19.]
Second Morning Lesson.

THOUGH your life's unclouded lot
May seem a green and sunny spot ;
Though shut from out your calm domain,
Are all the snarling fiends of pain :
And though the bright sprites, joy and mirth,
May gambol round your happy hearth ;
Yet is there cause for you to mourn,
And sometimes from these blessings turn,
And strive beneath your sore distress,
To patiently your souls possess.

Though you mourn not in anguish wild,
The loss of fortune, friends or child,
Enough for grief your heart within,
While nestles there disturbing sin.
The only real grief below,
'T is this that caused your Saviour's woe ;
The lingering cancer of the heart,
It always will some pain impart ;
Yet we, still bent to make it less,
Must patiently our souls possess.

Yes, patience ! patience ! it is good,
And brings us to a contrite mood,
To feel we ne'er can make depart
The plagues of sin which fill the heart.
And as it is God's blessed will,
Content to be but sinners still,
Let us yet strive by prayer and love,
Its heaviest curses to remove,
Till God with sinless hearts shall bless ;—
And patient thus our souls possess !

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER.

"The master saith my time is at hand."—[Mat. xxvi: 18.]—
Second Morning Lesson.

WHEN under dark and frowning skies we wend our
weary way,
And the deepening shades of evening drive off the
light of day,
If then our pathway lead us to a dark and dreary
wood,
Where the shades of old gigantic trees solemnly do
brood,
We enter it with fearful hearts almost as hush'd in
gloom
As if it led us, full of life, directly to the tomb !

And so upon the solemn path of penitence and
prayer —
For now the church doth call us all to go as pil-
grims there —
Beneath the darksome dreary shades wherewith sin
clothes the sky,
Our hearts subdued with sacred awe in timid silence
lie ;
And as we near the season of the Saviour's awful
death,

Our hearts grow still with deeper awe, and faint
and low our breath.

Oh, grant us, LORD, that we may feel with true and
keen distress,

How thorough and how deep it is — our hearts
dread sinfulness !

That so we may be full alike of gratitude and shame,
And worthy homage offer to thy all-glorious name,
That thou, the sinless, hast for us, the deeply sinful,
bled,

And bow'd on Calvary's darken'd height thy pierced
and bleeding head.

PASSION-WEEK.

THE next week before Easter has been called *Passion-Week*, because it is particularly devoted to the commemoration of the passion and death of CHRIST. It is also called the *Great Week*, and the *Holy Week*, on account of the important transactions which it witnessed, and the solemn exercises of devotion prescribed in it by the church.

This week was observed by the primitive Christians with great strictness of fasting and humiliation. They applied themselves to private and pub-

lic prayer; to hearing and reading God's holy word; and to the exercise of solemn repentance for the sins which caused the sufferings of the LORD of life.

MONDAY BEFORE EASTER.

"Is it I?"—[St. Mark, xiv: 19.] Gospel for the day.

SADLY at the pascal board
Seated with their blessed LORD,
CHRIST's disciples hear him say,
He must soon depart away.
When with sad and solemn air,
He declares that one is there
Who, a serpent in his way,
Springing on him, shall betray;—
All break forth with mournful cry,
Gracious LORD, and "*is it I*"?

Oh how wondrous! they are there,
Blessed objects of his care;
Ever he regards them such,
And he loves them passing much.
Now the feast is nearly pass'd;—
'Tis for all of them the last!—
He prepares to tread the path

Of his father's righteous wrath,
And for *them* to bleed and die —
Well may they question, "*is it I*"?

Teach us, Lord ! from Judas' fall,
How dark and weak we are all,
Make us feel that we may be
Traitorously vile as he ;
When thy word declares how sin
Creeps thy followers' hearts within,
And that feasting at thy board,
We may hate thee, blessed LORD,
Often let us humbly cry,
Holy JESUS ! "*is it I*"?

TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

"Arise and let us go hence."—[St. John xiv: 31.] Second Morning Lesson.

THE hour draws near—the awful hour,
When CHRIST must bow to death's dread power,
And calmly weighing all its woe,
He says, "arise, and let us go" !

Himself forgot, he tries to cheer
His fainting followers' gloom and fear :

“ I leave you to prepare your home,
And then the COMFORTER shall come.”

“ Yet love me, and obey my will,
And I will love and guard you still ;
And though on earth our converse cease,
I leave with you my hallow'd peace.”

“ Then be ye not by fear distress'd,
And let not trouble fill your breast ;
I will return and cheer your woe,
Therefore “ arise, and let us go ” !

What wondrous love ! though he could see
That down th' abyss of agony
His tortur'd soul must quickly sink,
And of its bitter waters drink ;

Yet did he fail not, though he stood
Upon the verge of that dark flood ;
Still did he spend his latest breath,
Their faith to cheer — nor heeded death !

What are our woes ? to his no more
Than the light ripple on the shore
Whose gentle swell the pebble laves,
Is to the wide sea's countless waves.

Then let us not, when sorrows come,
Sink into selfish, cheerless gloom :

When called to tread the path of wo,
Cheerfully let us rise and go.

When called by death from friends to part,
Though it may try and wring the heart ;
And though *their* tears may freely flow,
Cheerfully let us rise and go.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

“And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him.—[St. Luke xxii: 43.] Gospel for the day.

NEARER the dark hour comes — alone
Within the garden's bound,
The fainting SAVIOUR kneels and prays
In gloomy grief profound :
FATHER, if yet thou canst and wilt,
Remove — remove the cup !
Yet if it be thy will, I 'll drink
Its bitter contents up !

Blood oozed from out his tortured frame ;
He agonized in prayer ;
The crushing load that pressed his soul
Seemed more than he could bear.
The sins of all a sinning world
On his pure heart were laid ;

And with tremendous agonies,
Was the high ransom paid !

Mysterious was the awful wo,
That shook the Saviour's heart ;
Nor we nor angels ne'er can know
Its keen and bitter smart.
Dread indeed it must have been,
To make *his* spirit dim,
And bring an angel down from heaven
To cheer and strengthen HIM.

Oh, let us pause and view the scene !
The lesson learn from it,
In trials dread beyond our strength,
To patient!y *submit* !
Then, though in crushed and prostrate state,
Angels shall find us there,
And lift our heads from out the dust,
And strengthen us to bear !

THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER.

" Crucify him ! crucify him !" — [St. Luke xxiii: 21.] Gospel
for the day.

THE garden agony is o'er ;
The traitor kiss is given ;

And the meek victim, now betrayed,
To sacrifice is driven.
Submissive patience in his mein,
Love in his gentle eye,
He stands 'mid the malignant crowd,
Who cry out "*crucify!*"

Oh blessed sufferer! shall we
When foes around us throng,
And spend on us, with bitter hate,
Their violence and wrong;
Shall we, who e'en deserve yet more,
Raise a rebellious cry,
When thou, all sinless, *prayed* for those
Whose shout was "*crucify?*"

But see! they lead him to the cross;
They nail him rudely there;
The iron, driven through his limbs,
Both soul and body tear!
And yet no murmur 'scapes his lips;
He is content to die;—
"*Forgive them,*" is his latest prayer;
Their shout is "*crucify!*"

Oh, give to us thy lofty love,
Thy patience meek and mild;
Make us, like thee, serene 'mid pain,

Yet humble as a child !
And when life's trials on the heart
In gloomy darkness lie,
Remind us, LORD, that e'en round *thee*
The crowd cried "crucify!"

GOOD FRIDAY.

THE church commemorates on the fast of Good Friday, the sufferings and death of CHRIST. It is called *Good* Friday from the exalted good which we derive from his sufferings "who, by the shedding of his own blood, obtained eternal redemption for us."

Good Friday has been observed from the first ages of Christianity as a day of strict fasting and humiliation. Christians should express upon this day deep grief for their sins, which drew upon their blessed Saviour the shameful and painful death of the cross.

"It is finished."—[St. John xix: 30.] Gospel for the day.

BE still:—it is an awful hour—
The earth is clothed in gloom;
See ye not there in ghastly guise
The tenants of the tomb?
In winding sheets they walk the streets,
And meet their kindred there;

Their shadowy white, with dubious light,
Makes pale the dismal air.

The temple walls in vain are strong,
Its gates are closed in vain ;
The holiest is now exposed —
Its veil is rent in twain.

The crazy earth with struggling birth,
Gives to an earthquake vent ;
And with loud shocks the heaving rocks
Are violently rent !

Well may the air grow dark and drear ;
Well may the dead arise ;
Well may the solid rocks be rent,
For CHRIST their LORD now dies !
Oh, not a flower fades ere its hour
When man resigns his breath ;—
But earth's toss'd breast doth well attest
Its MAKER's awful death.

'T was awful ! All its pain he met,
Though flesh might faint and shrink ;
And from the drugg'd wine's offer'd cup
He turn'd, and would not drink :
He felt the worst which sin accurs'd
Could on his soul impose,
That he his love might better prove
For all our human woes !

'T is finished now ! That wondrous plan
Of grace to sinners given ;
The travail of his soul is pass'd,
And CHRIST is King in heaven !
The work is done, and heaven is won,
Because our LORD hath died ;
And, save the cross, we count all loss —
With Him we 're crucified !

EASTER EVEN.

THE fast of Easter Even is designed to commemorate the state in which our Saviour existed between his death and resurrection ; a state of being, belief in which is expressed in the creed by the words "he descended into hell," or, "he went into the place of departed spirits." * The word, hell, is expressed in the original by two words ; one of which is used to denote the place of torment, the other the place of departed spirits : and in this latter signification it is supposed to be used in the creed.

That there is a place where the souls of the departed rest till the resurrection, seems evident from the fact that scripture represents the rewards of heaven and the punishments of hell as adjudged to

* Rubric before the Apostles' creed.

the righteous and the wicked at the General Judgment *after* the resurrection. As we cannot suppose the soul to become insensible after death, it must remain in a state distinct from the proper happiness of heaven or the misery of hell.

It will be seen that the church has appointed morning and evening lessons, and an epistle and gospel, which form part of a morning service, for this fast; and that therefore the term Easter Even, was not meant to apply to the *night time*, but to the whole day.

“He descended into hell.”—[Apostles’ creed.]

MYSTERIOUS place, where spirits wait
Their pure and perfect bliss,
Catching some joy from life to come,—
Freed from the pain of this.
Moved not thy shadowy realm to hail
The LORD of life and death,
Who ere he rose supreme o’er all,
Descended first beneath ?

There did he ’mid the hosts of God,
A sweet communion hold,
And cheer them by his coming, long
By prophecy foretold ?
Did they not feel when thou wert there,
’T were bliss enough to be,—

Without high heaven's consummate joy,—
Forever, LORD, with thee ?

Mysterious realm ! canst thou not send
Some blessed spirit back,
To cheer us, as we onward wend
Along life's weary track ?
Our friends — are they all there and blest ?
And "do they love us still ?"
And *do* they hover round our path,
Knowing our good and ill ?

Oh tell us ! Is it but a dream,
When in the silent night
They come and bless us, and appear
So beautiful and bright ?
The halo'd form, the loving eye,
That the deep spirit warms,
Are they from thee — or but the shapes
Desiring fancy forms ?

No voice replies ! Enough to know
That there all spirits rest :
'The lost to be more wretched still,
The happy still more blest !
Enough to know that when the soul
Shakes off its cumbering clod,
It enters heaven's near ante-room,
And there awaits its God.

And though with fading dying flowers,
The fragrance too be past ;
Though when the harp-strings shatter'd are,
The music breathes its last.
Yet when the body blends with earth,
'T is *it* alone that dies ;
The freed soul hastens to its home,
With CHRIST in Paradise ! *

EASTER - SUNDAY .

THE Church commemorates this day, the glorious event of our Saviour's resurrection. This festival, for antiquity and excellence, takes precedence of all others ; it was observed from the very first ages, the only dispute being, not about the propriety of the festival itself, but about the proper day on which it was to be observed. It was anciently called the *Great Day*, the *Feast of Feasts*, and the *Queen of Feasts*.

The term Easter, is derived from a Saxon word, which means *to rise*. This fast is always held on the Sunday after the full moon which immediately succeeds the twenty-first day of March—the vernal

* Paradise is the name which our Saviour applied to the place of happy departed spirits when he said to the penitent thief,—
“This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

equinox. The occurrence of Easter Sunday regulates all the movable feasts of the year. It cannot be earlier than the twenty-second of March, nor later than the twenty-fifth of April.

Oh, blessed and bright is the Easter-day
That cometh in early spring,
When the first flowers win through the ground
their way,
And the birds merrily sing.
'T is the fresh spring-time, when life from death
Doth leap into gladsome birth ;
And o'er the dead world come a wakening breath —
'T is the Easter-day of earth !

Rejoice ! rejoice ! The Saviour hath risen
From the dark and noisome tomb ;—
To roll the stone from his rocky prison,
Angels from heaven have come.
Oh rejoice ! rejoice ! for there's joy in heaven,
And there's mad chagrin in hell ;
For the blest now know that man's ransom 's given,
And the fiends do know as well !

Oh, blessed and bright is the Easter-day,
For our Saviour's pains are o'er ;
Escaped from the curse of our sins away,
He will bleed for us no more.

And he shall go up with a merry noise,
And his saints shall with him go ;
And they all shall drink of the deathless joys
That from God, their fountain, flow !

Oh blessed and bright is the Easter-day :
It tells us that we shall rise,
And shall join the LORD when his bright array
Comes flashing along the skies.
For the dry seed springs, and the dead flowers
bloom,
And man, like his Maker made,
Shall rise from the dust of the narrow tomb,
In glory angelic arrayed !

EASTER MONDAY AND TUESDAY.

THE design of the church in these days is to confirm our faith in the doctrine of the resurrection.

EASTER MONDAY.

“ Then Peter opened his mouth and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.”—
[Acts x: 34, 35.] Portion of scripture, appointed for the epistle for the day.

WHEN dropp'd into the silent deep
The pebble moves a wave,

Whose widening circles onward sweep,
And wake old ocean's tranquil sleep,
And distant regions lave !

So to Jerusalem the word
Of light and life first sent
By willing hearts, and warm, was heard,
Then hearts beyond those bounds it stirr'd,
Till o'er the world it went.

It circled round the Grecian isles,
It washed the Lybian strand ;
It swelled from off the chalky piles,
Where throned Britain sits and smiles
To India's gorgeous land !

The Idol Temples' corner stones
Were shaken where it went,
And with their crash, the mournful tones
Of superstition's dying groans
Most fearfully were blent.

Oh God ! yet speed that wave of light,
Till o'er the world it rolls,
And dissipates the moral night
Which broods with dark malignant might
O'er countless human souls !

EASTER TUESDAY.

"Therefore if any man be in CHRIST, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new."
[2nd Corin. v: 17.] Second Lesson for Evening.

'T is wondrous that from its dark grave,
The starry butterfly breaks forth,
And seems, as free its bright wings wave,
A living flower broke loose from earth !

But yet more wondrous is the soul
That may from sins dread grave arise,
And spurning longer earth's control,
Spread its bright pinions for the skies.

Itself renewed, all things are new ;—
A change hath come o'er all the world ;
Its olden beauty fades from view ;
Its banner'd glory all is furled.

It cannot see what once it did ;
The garlands drop from grinning death ;
And pleasure, now no longer hid,
Shows gnawing worms its heart beneath.

Old things are pass'd— all things are new ;
A holier world it lives within,
Where blessed prospects cheer the view,
Though shadow'd yet by lingering sin.

Within that world CHRIST lives and reigns ;
Round *him* its clustering pleasures cling ;
He soothes the spirits griefs and pains —
He gives to joy its freest wing.

It is a world of hope and love ;
A world of faith, and praise, and prayer,
Where come bless'd spirits from above ;
For GOD's own smile is resting there.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

"Whatsoever is born of GOD overcometh the world."—[I. John v: 4.] Epistle for the day.

THE soul of man, which, fixed on earth,
Derives from GOD its second birth,
Panting and fluttering towards its home,
This fleeting world doth overcome.

It sees what once it could not see ;
It feels what once it could not feel ;
Life's rainbow hues forever flee,
And the rude rocks and thorns reveal.

New sight, new taste, new joy, new hope,
Exhaustless mines of pleasure ope ; —

As this world changes to its view,
The other world is changing too :

As this grows poor, and dim, and dull,
That grows glorious, beautiful !
But all its glories, rich and rare,
Are scarcely seen, *for CHRIST is there !*

It cannot find its rest below ;
It cannot settled comfort know ;
It seems a lost and banished thing
Of bright though dim'd and drooping wing !

It moves amid life's joyous crowd,
With sorrow's seeming burden bow'd,
Yet in its secret chambers rest
The priceless treasures of the blest !

And as the dove, whose silver wings
Have lain mid base defiling things,
Winging towards heaven its tranquil flight,
In its pure dew grows clean and white.

So shall the soul which flies above,
And floats within the heaven of love,
Grow purer for its blessed home,
And the dark world thus overcome !

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE PENITENT CHURCH.

[Hosea, Chap. xiv:] First Evening Lesson.

PROSTRATE before thine awful throne,
 Thy CHURCH, oh God, in suppliance bends ;
 Her sackcloth robe is girded on ;
 Her wailing cry to thee ascends.
 She pleads with thee for pardoning grace,
 And meekly all her sins confesses ;—
 With CHRIST's own blood her stains efface !—
 The cleansing blood that saves and blesses !*

She will not on the world's arm lean ;
 She will not on herself rely ;
 Low in the dust she cries "unclean" !
 And dare not draw thy presence nigh.
 She knows that she is weak and vile,
 And dares approach thy footstool, only
 Because she knows that thou wilt smile
 Upon the contrite, lost and lonely ! †

"Freely my love on thee I shed,
 Freely thy past offence forgive ;
 My grace like dew upon thee spread,

† Hosea xiv: 1, 2.

† Ib. 3d v.

Shall bid thee wake again and live.
And thou shalt like the lily grow,
That spotless springs beneath the sun,
And firmly fix thyself below,
Like cedar roots on Lebanon"!*

"Thy branches far and wide shall spread,
Thy beauty like the olive's be;
And from thy crown'd and lofty head,
Shall come refreshing fragrancy.
All they who 'neath thy shadow come,
As corn that finds a favoring place,
Or nurtur'd vine, whose clusters bloom;—
Shall grow in holiness and grace"!†

Thus bless'd of thee, Oh LORD of Love,
Thy Church shall praise thee and adore;
And fixing all her hopes above,
Say "What do I with idols more"?
I've heard thy voice, thy voice obey'd;—
Thanksgiving for its gracious sound!
And by thy blessing fruitful made,
On me shall holy fruit be found."‡

* Hosea xlv: 4, 5.

†Ib. 6, 7.

‡Ib. 8.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

WE ARE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS.

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."—[1st St. Peter, ii: 11.] Epistle for the day.

"STRANGERS and pilgrims"—so we are ;

'Tis our high privilege to be ;

Our home and country lies afar—

We 're travelling to eternity !

Lightly we pitch our tents below ;

We can not — would not — dare not stay ;

We pause to rest — then onward go ;

We stoop to drink — and then away !

The howling storms beat o'er our path ;

The lowering clouds invest the sky ;

And even the day which sunshine hath,

Rests on our brows too scorchingly.

We cannot stay — we long for rest

Within our FATHER's calm abode,

Where heat nor storms no more molest,

Where reign our SAVIOUR and our GOD.

Though on a holy mount we stop,

Where heaven seems coming down to us

Where blessed radiance bathes the top,

And CHRIST seems doubly glorious ;
“ Here let us pitch our tents and stay,” *
Though in our raptur’d trance we cry,
Because we “ wist not what to say ;” †
Yet e’en *its* glories fade and die !

Oh then as *strangers* let us live,
As *pilgrims* pass life’s desert through ;
Lured by no joy the world can give,
And always keeping heaven in view.
We rest not long beneath the shade ;
We take not with us gauds and toys,
Lest by their cumbering weight delayed,
We fail to reach eternal joys !

Cheerily, then, we’ll rise and go,
Singing as onward still we wend ;—
For wearier as our footsteps grow,
The nearer is our journey’s end.
And should we, as we near the gate,
Fall panting ere we quite could win ;
The angel guards that round it wait,
Shall bear us up and take us in !

* The language of St. Peter at the transfiguration of the Saviour.—[Mark ix: 5.

† Ib. ix: 6.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning."—[St. James i: 17. Epistle for the day.

How cheering to know, in a dark world like this,
Where the spirit of change mars each fabric of bliss ;
And now in the heart of all loveliness lurks,
And now sits and sneers o'er the ruin it works—
How cheering to know that there rules One above,
Who sits on a throne, all whose pillars are LOVE ;
In whom, mid the wrecks of worlds ruined and
burning,

There cannot be change, neither shadow of turning;
His promises sure, we can turn unto him
When all else about us grows darkling and dim ;—
As the scene of our joys to his fixed throne is tied,
We know that forever it still will abide,
And the changes that come shall not tell of decay,
But of beauty and glory increasing for aye !

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE COMFORTER.

[St. John xvi: 5.] Epistle for the day.

WE heed him not when health is ours,
And pulses strongly stir ;
But when disease invades the powers,
We seek a comforter !

When pleasure frolics round our path,
We trifle long with her ;
But when she comes to reap in wrath,
Flee to a comforter.

When passion's hosts invade the heart,
And the soul's vision blur,
We yield it up, and feel the smart —
'Then seek a comforter !

Many are thy names and sweet,
But oh, none lovelier
Thou blest, life-giving Paraclete,
Than this of *comforter* !

Oh grant us, LORD, before we yet
In sin too widely err,
And grieve him till he quite forget —
Grant thy true comforter !

ASCENSION DAY.

THE Church this day commemorates our blessed SAVIOUR's ascension into heaven, and his sitting at the right hand of GOD. The commemoration of CHRIST's ascension, at the expiration of forty days after the resurrection, has always been observed as a festival in the church.

"This same JESUS which is taken up from us into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—
[Acts i: 11.] Epistle for the day.

THE SAVIOUR goes up on his bright car of cloud,
Which, sent by the FATHER, to bear him hath bow'd;
And his startled disciples stand gazing with dread
At the fast fading glory that beams o'er their head.

They could see the mild Pageant float upward afar,
Till it shone with the light of evening's soft star;
And it seemed as from sight in the blue depths it
stole,

Like the light of dear hope going out in the soul.

But they saw not the bright hosts of angels that
came

With joyfullest speed on their pinions of flame;
They heard not their harpings which rang through
the dome, [home.

Nor the loud shout of triumph which welcom'd him

WHITSUNDAY.

THIS festival is designed to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles in the shape of cloven fiery tongues. It occurred on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, the anniversary of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai.

This festival may have been called *Whitsunday*, that is, *White Sunday*, from the diffusion of light which on this day fell on the Apostles; or, more probably, from its being one of the two principal seasons of Baptism, when all who were baptized wore *white* garments, in token of the spiritual purity signified by the ordinance.

“When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”—[Acts ii: 1, 2, 3.] Epistle for the day.

SPIRIT ! that on the strong wind rushed,
In cloven tongues of fire,
And in the Apostles' aw'd hearts gushed,
And all the place with glory flushed —
Our languid hearts inspire !

And though to us may not be given
A grace so free and wide,

As wont to come of old from heaven
Into the soul resistless driven,
A full and rushing tide ;—

Yet fill us, Holy Ghost, with love ;
Fill us with living zeal ;
And let thine ever-brooding dove
The warm'd heart's weakened feelings move
More burningly to feel !

Oh cleanse our vile, neglected hearts !
They need — they need it much !
Efface the stains which sin imparts,
Till every cankered spot departs
Before thy healing touch !

Give to thy heralds double grace
To preach to sinners lost,
Till there shall come to each dark place,
To every name and every race,
A blessed PENTECOST !

MONDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

"And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." [St. John iii: 19, 20.] Gospel for the day.

THE rugged cliff at distance view'd,
With twilight's softening veil before it,
Seems with as fair a tint imbued
As the blue heaven that 's bending o'er it ;
And Fancy, should her eye rest there,
Would call it "peace and beauty's dwelling :"
And deem its flowers were fresh and rare,
And its pure fountains softly welling.

But when the cliff is nearer seen,
And noon-day's sun is on it shining,
Appear sharp thorns, rough rocks between,
And hissing serpents round them twining.
Upon an old and shiver'd branch,
The bird of prey is screaming,
And in their dens the wild beasts cranch
Their savage meals with red eyes gleaming.

So human hearts may beauty wear,
'Neath nature's twilight dim and tender,
And seem to be surpassing fair,

The home of glory, honor, splendor !
 But when the *spirit's light* shines in,
 To the clear day their depths revealing ;
 Then does it show the shapes of sin,
 Through all their gloomy by-ways stealing.

There av'rice, lust and hatred are,
 And there their carnival are keeping ;
 The passions all are gathered there —
 Some are awake and some are sleeping.
 No wonder that they hate the light,
 Which shapes so dark and vile uncovers,
 And dimness love, which to the sight
 Softens the scenes round which it hovers !

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

[1st Thess. v: 17.] Second Morning Lesson.

WHEN first, oh man, your waken'd eyes
 Salute the joyous morning skies,
 And your fresh spirits are as bright
 And happy as the just born light ;
 And your glad veins are bounding free
 In life's and health's full revelry ;

Then would you give to feeling play,
And make e'en transport happier — *pray!*

And when days' noisy scenes are past,
And silent evening comes at last,
And quiet settles on the soul,
With holy and divine control ;
Making you feel the solemn power
Of that most sacred musing hour,
Ere sink your souls in sleep away,
Oh give them to your Maker — *pray!*

And when as, week by week, you hear
The preacher's words salute your ear,
And urge you now your souls to bring
To Christ, an humble offering,
And, lying at his blessed feet,
Hear his pard'ning accents sweet ;
Oh yield your hearts to his kind sway,
Confess his mighty love — and *pray!*

And when you read his sacred word,
And feel your heart divinely stirr'd,
Melting in pity and distress
O'er Jesus' trying wretchedness,
Or, kindling, as you see him shine,
In all the God-head's power divine,
Yield to the rushing spirit's sway,
Gladly give up your hearts — and *pray!*

In every scene of joy or wo,
That lights or dims your path below —
In every state of life or health —
In want, or competence, or wealth :
If you would find a balm for grief,
For painful gratitude relief,
Remorse's vultures fright away,
And woo sweet peace, the dove — oh *pray* !

TRINITY SUNDAY.

THIS festival, in commemoration of the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, is comparatively of modern date. As the praises of the Trinity were constantly celebrated in the doxologies and hymns and creeds of the ancient church, it was not thought necessary to set apart a particular day for that which was done on each. In consequence, however, of the heresies of Arius and others who opposed this divine mystery, the church thought proper that the great mystery of the Trinity should be more solemnly commemorated on a particular day.

The day was chosen in preference to any other for the more solemn celebration of the mystery, because after our LORD's ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon his disciples,

there ensued the full knowledge of the glorious and incomprehensible doctrine of the Trinity. The church having celebrated in order all the greater festivals, the Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection, Ascension of our LORD, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, properly concludes these solemnities with a full, special, and express service to the honor of the holy, blessed and glorious Trinity.

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went straightway out of the water ; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of GOD descending upon him like a dove and lighting upon him ; and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”—[St. Mat. iii: 16 and 17.] Second Morning Lesson.

BEHOLD the dread, mysterious *Three*,
Father, Son, and Dove,
On earth the blessed TRINITY,
Fulfilling plans of love.

We see cloud blend with cloud on high,
And streams together flow ;
But THEIR mysterious unity
We cannot grasp or know.

Distinct, yet one ; apart, yet blent
In union close and dear ;
One sending and the other sent ;—
The one above, one here.

How can we grasp a thought like this ?
We 'll task our minds no more ;
Content with all the hosts of bliss
To wander and adore !

Yet our weak human hearts and fond,
Dreading to be alone,
Can scarce with bliss and joy surround
A solitary throne !

They see it wrapped in clouds of gloom,
Of judgment and of ire,
And o'er it writ the awards of doom
In characters of fire.

As, gazing on the blinding sun,
The dazzled vision views
Strange shapes across the blue sky run,
All clothed in sombre hues ;

So, far too awful for our eye,
And seen not as it is,
We turn its bless'd sublimity
To dread severities !

But when we know that CHRIST is there,
Who, with the HOLY DOVE,
Doth, with the FATHER, Godhead share,
It seems all light and love !

Faith fixes there her eager glance ;
 Hope's pinion upward springs ;
And love, in deep and hallow'd trance,
 To the throne's footstool clings.

FATHER! give us this truth to feel,
 That thou and they are *one* ;
And, through thy HOLY GHOST, reveal
 Thy blessed self and SON !

SON! plead for us at GOD's right hand ;
 Thy death and passion plead !
Our loving Advocate, still stand,
 And for us intercede !

SPIRIT! send thy quick'ning breath
 Our dormant souls to move,
That they may feel CHRIST's precious death,
 And GOD's exceeding love !

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"And this commandment have we from him:—That he who loveth God, love his brother also."—[1st St. John, iv: 21.]—
Epistle for the day.

Poor we need not ever be ;
Wealth may be always ours,
To give to poor humanity
In fertilizing showers.

Does the proud rich man scorn our lot,
Passing in splendor by ?
We give him what his wealth buys not —
Our Christian charity !

Do foes their thirsting vengeance slake,
And all our stay remove ?
We give them more than they can take —
A Christian's pardoning love !

And though in want, and gloom, and wo,
Darkly through life we rove —
We scatter treasures as we go ;—
Treasures of Christian love !

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

“For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.”—[1st John, iii: 20.] Epistle for the day.

WERE an angel sent down from the regions above,
To guide us through life from the hour we were
born ;

Who, when we did well, should smile on us in love ;
And when we did ill should rebuke us and warn :

How ashamed we should feel that his pure eye
should see,

And his pure heart be grieved by our folly and
sin ;

And how would we strive in his presence to be
All free from corruption without and within !

Such an angel we have, though unseen, at our side,
And he whispers his warnings persuasive and
“still,”

But down on the stream of indulgence we glide,
Propell’d by our passions, our lust and our will !

But a greater than angels, or viewless or seen,
Is ever about us, and looks through the heart ;
And we ne’er from his eye its corruption can screen,
Or from its calm watching one moment depart.

Oh then let us *beware*, and tremblingly feel
 That, if conscience, so darken'd, hath any control;
 Where its voice of rebuke now in whispers doth
 steal,
 How God's voice of anger shall startle the soul!

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY.

[1st St. Peter v: 5.] Epistle for the day.

OH put it as a garment on!
 'Tis the pilgrim's fitting dress,
 And by its sober aspect known,
 Some may scorn, but some will bless!

'Tis better than a golden shield
 To secure thy sure defence;
 For murder oft will homage yield,
 To an humble innocence.

And never put the garment by,
 As 't is best for every weather;—
 Beneath a bright or frowning sky,
 Keep its blessed folds together!

Pleasant covering it will yield thee,
 When joy's sunshine glareth much;

And in sorrow's storm 't will shield thee
From its keen and chilling touch !

'Tis worn by angel hosts above,
Holy radiance to it given ;
And, dipp'd in the pure fount of love,
'Thou shalt wear it still in heaven !

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestations of the sons of God."—[Rom. viii. 19.] Epistle for the day.

LORD, our spirits pant to meet thee
In thy blessed home above ;
Mid thy angel hosts to greet thee,
And be bathed in bliss and love !
Oh may all our ardent longing
Guided to its true point be,
Till our warm hopes, thick and thronging,
Centre, blessed LORD, in thee !

Sons of God ! what glorious creatures
We may yet, through thee, become,
When our pure and spirit-natures
With a life immortal bloom.
Help us, while below remaining,

Still to live so close to thee,
 As becomes those who are gaining
 Thy blest childrens' liberty !

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"When Simon Peter saw it he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, oh Lord."—[St. Luke v: 8.] Gospel for the day.

WHEN on the sinner's vision first
 The glorious power of God doth burst,
 This is the language of his heart,
 "From one so sinful, oh depart !"

"Thou art mighty, holy, just :—
 I, a poor groveller in the dust :
 Leave me in my vileness, LORD,
 A creature sinful, lost, abhorr'd !"

Thou wilt not, LORD of love, depart ;
 Thou wilt not leave the waken'd heart ;
 But o'er it bend with anxious care,
 And drive off horror, doubt, despair !

O'er thy glory's dazzling glow
 Thou the soft veil of love wilt throw,
 And drawing to thy sacred breast,
 Bid him be trustful, calm and blest.

And thou shalt make his new-born soul
 Like Peter's, full of love's control;
 And he shall say with beating heart,
 "From thee I'll never, never part"!*

Oh! give us Lord his love to thee,
 Coupled with firmer constancy!
 Thy spirit's strength'ning aid impart,
 That we from thee may ne'er depart.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE SOUL'S RESURRECTION.

[Romans vi:] Epistle for the day.]

THE planted seed that seems to die,
 For abounding life prepares,
 And soon shoots up its fresh stem high,
 And fruit and foliage bears.
 The soul to sin and self that's dead,
 Its better life beginning;
 From out its dark and dreary bed,
 Its way to the light is winning.

* Peter answered and said unto him, though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will *I* never be offended.—[St. Mat. xxvi: 33.]

It grows 'neath favoring sun and dew,
 And putteth its blossoms forth ;
 It beareth fruit all ripe and new,
 And scatters it o'er the earth.
 The fruits of joy and love and peace,
 Are in larger harvests given ;
 And as on earth they never cease,
 They 're grafted anew in heaven.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

[St. Mark viii:] Gospel for the day.

Few are the words by the Saviour spoken,
 Which we our own may call ; *
 Yet that blest bread to the nations broken,
 Would fill the souls of all.
 Let fainting hearts in life's desert, haste
 Unto that pleasant spot, †
 Where Christ does stand 'mid the dreary waste,
 And breaks the bread for all to taste,
 And they shall hunger not !

* St. John xxi: 25.

† "Now there was much grass in the place." Jno. vi: 10.
 These words are part of the description of a previous miracle,
 similar to the one described in the eighth chapter of St. Mark.

Oh! wondrous word! that thro' circling ages,
 To every human heart
 That bends in faith o'er its living pages,
 Doth life and health impart!
 To each and all and in every mood,
 That human hearts are placed,
 Always their best and sustaining good,
 And like to Israel's angel-food,
 Fitted to every taste.*

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."—
 [Ex. xiv: 15.]—Last Morning Lesson.

FORWARD, Christian! on thy track!
 Cast no lingering glances back!—
 Though before thee raging waves
 Look as if they all were graves:—
 God shall through the foaming sea
 Make a pathway dry for thee!

FORWARD, Christian! pause not here,
 For the foe is on thy rear!
 Turn not to your bonds again;

* "Thou feedest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labor: able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.—[Wisdom xvi: 20.]

Go, and “quit yourselves like men”—
Dare amid the deep to fly,
 To turn backward is to die!

FORWARD, Christian! Stand not still
 Hazarding eternal ill:
 To press onward, is to gain
 Freedom from a galling chain,
 And to reach a land of rest
 Where thou ’lt be forever blest!

Resting on that blessed shore,
 All thy fear and trembling o’er;
 Thou an hymn of holy praise
 Shall to thy deliverer raise,
 Whose loud burden still shall be,
 “God hath triumphed gloriously!” *

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

“Neither be ye idolaters.”—[1st Cor. x: 7.]—Epistle for the day.

THOU hast *riches* — oh beware
 They be not to thee a snare!
 And thou bow to them the knee,
 With a dark idolatry!
 Giant idol, ’mid a crowd

* Ex. xv: 1.

Shouting forth its praises loud ;
Maddening round its glittering car,
Which beams brightly from afar ;
Worshipp'd with so wild a zeal,
That before its crushing wheel
Earnest devotees will lie,
And rejoice for him to die : —
Beware ! Its dark wheel will roll
Crushingly across thy soul ! *

Pleasure's shape may be to thee
The object of idolatry !
Round her rich and glowing form
Keen desire may wanton warm,
And her full and loving eye
Beam resistless witchery ;
On a soft and flowery throne,
Resting with a loosen'd zone,
Smiling on the gay young crowd,
Laughing round her free and loud,
She may seem to thee as given,
By a kind indulgent heaven !
Of her smiles and lures *beware* —
'T is the painted fiend *Despair* !

Purer things than these may be
Thine objects of idolatry :
Brother, sister, husband, wife —

* Allusion is here made to the Indian idol, Juggernaut.

Dearer to thy soul than life !
 Darling infant, that doth rest
 Like a rose-bud on thy breast ;
 Genius with his sounding lyre,
 Eye of light and soul of fire ;
 Fame whose clarion moveth thee,
 As a tempest does the sea ;—
 Some of these thy heart may love
 Better than thy God above !
 Oh forsake these idols all,
 For they wither, die, and fall.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE SAVIOUR WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM.

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace !—but now are they hid from thine eyes."—[St. Luke, xix: 41, 42.]—Gospel for the day.

"JERUSALEM ! Jerusalem !

Thou hast my prophets slain,
 And soon, to crown thy cup of guilt,
 Thy Saviour's blood wilt drain !
 How have I hung in pitying love
 Around that sacred spot,
 Wishing to shield and save her sons,
 And she consented not ! "

“Behold, your house is desolate ;
 Your foes are gathering round ;
 Your stately beauty all shall be
 Laid even with the ground.
 Ye shall not see me till I come
 With glory round me pour’d,
 Amid *your* cries of “Blest is he
 Who cometh from the LORD” ! *

Oh sinner, such is CHRIST to thee !
 While thou dost fill the cup
 Of sin and death, he pleads and cries,
 “How shall I give thee up ?”
 But when that cup is running o’er,
 He bids thee then *farewell*,
 To meet thee at the judgment-day ;
 Its horrors who can tell ?

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

“And the publican standing afar off would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying—
 “God be merciful to me a sinner !”—[St. Luke xviii: 13.] Gospel for the day.

* The Jews were displeased at the multitude because they cried “Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.”—[Mat. xxi: 9, 15.] Our Saviour says to them, that when they see him again, they themselves will adopt the same language.—[Mat. xxiii: 38, 39.]

ALMIGHTY and heart-searching God,
I dare not look toward thine abode ;
All my vile heart dare ask of thee,
Is " God be merciful to me !"

I know that in thy holy sight
My heart with leprosy is white ;
I cannot say ought else to thee,
But " God be merciful to me !"

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

" If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."—[2nd Corin. iii: 9.] Epistle for the day.

'T WAS glorious when on Sinai's top
God gave his awful law,
And Israel's host around its base,
Stood trembling and in awe.
'T was glorious, too -- the lightning's flash,
The thunder's startling peal,
Which turn'd the gather'd people pale,
And made the mountain reel !

Glorious was the written law,
Which God's own hand did trace ;

And glorious was the dazzling light
 That shone on Moses' face.
 That glory's gone ! Now lone and bare
 The mount where God hath spoken ;
 The dust of Moses slumbers — where ?—
 The tablets all are broken !

But the spirit's better ministry
 Doth with the glory glow
 Of mercy, righteousness and grace,
 That from it freely flow.
 It breathes its laws to human souls
 Upon a tranquil mount ;
 And makes them glorious with the light
 From love's exhaustless fount !

One was a storm-cloud, from whose breast
 Consuming fires were leaping ;
 The other was the sky beyond,
 In holy beauty sleeping.
 So did it sleep !— the cloud of wrath
 Has faded all away,
 And we now walk beneath the light
 Of mercy's purer day.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"Who is my neighbor?"—[St. Luke x: 29.] Gospel for the day.

THAT man is my neighbor
 Who suffers distress,
 Whenever my labor
 Can reach him to bless :
 Whatever may ail him,
 If aid I can lend,
 GOD bids me to hail him
 As brother and friend !

Amid the broad ocean
 On green sunny isle,
 And, beyond its commotion,
 By Ganges and Nile,
 My neighbors are dwelling ;
 But wounded they lie,
 And each moment is telling
 What myriads die !

Oh up with thine ointment,
 Thine oil and thy wine ;
 By God's own appointment
 They 're neighbors of thine
 Oh let them not perish,
 But haste o'er the wave
 To cheer and to cherish ;
 T' enlighten and save !

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away."—[1st St. Peter i: 24.] Second Evening Lesson.

MORTAL ! thou away must pass
Like the dry and faded grass ;
Though in spring-time's freshest hour,
Thou must wither like its flower.

Learn it from the falling leaf,
That thy life must be but brief ;
Heed the warnings to thee given,
By all bright things under heaven.

Thou mayest love the flowers to rear ;—
To thy heart they may be dear ;
But though fair unto thine eye,
Well thou knowest they *must die* !

Dost thou hope to see them last
Till the rolling year be past ?
Dost thou think that they will prove
Like the Amaranths above ?

Treat thyself as thou dost them !
As the flower must leave its stem,
Even when it first doth spring,
'Tis to thee a passing thing.

Thou art like the fading grass ;
 Like the flower thou too must pass ;
 Live not as though were given thee
 Earthly immortality !

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

GOD PROVIDETH.

“ Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns : yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.”—[St. Mat. vi: 26.] Gospel for the day.

HAPPY pensioner of heaven,
 To whom the earth is freely given
 By a gracious God, to be
 An exhaustless granary !
 Never planting, never reaping,
 Always singing, flying, leaping,
 Free from care and free from sadness,
 Light-winged type of gayest gladness,
 How doth he our faith reprove,
 And rebuke our little love ;
 And, as on glad wing he glideth,
 Hear him singing, “ God provideth” !

Are not we more worth than they,
 Creatures of a summer’s day ?
 Let us not, too anxious, borrow

Needless sadness from the morrow ;
 Let us not too deeply care
 What we eat, or drink, or wear :
 Seeking first our God and heaven,
 These things too shall all be given.
 See the wanderer of air !
 He ne'er wants the best of fare ;
 And, as on glad wing he glideth,
 Hear him singing " God provideth " !

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

" Rooted and grounded in love."—[Eph. iii: 17.] Epistle for the day.

LORD, before thy footstool kneeling,
 Daring not to look above,
 We deplore our frigid feeling,
 We confess our feeble love !

Slightly grounded, slowly growing,
 Storm without and worm within ;
 Quivering, reed-like, when are blowing
 Blasts of passion, woe and sin ;

Let our roots be deeper driven
 In the blessed soil of love ;
 That as strength to them is given,
 We may fear no storms above.

Give us, with all saints in union,
 CHRIST's unbounded love to know,
 Till our hearts by that communion
 With a kindred love o'erflow !

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."—[2nd Peter iii, 13.] Second Lesson for Evening.

CHRISTIAN, what to thee is sorrow ?
 'T is a shadow passing by,
 Here to-day, and gone to-morrow ;
 Lost in bright eternity !

Let, then, sufferings come and thicken
 Darkly o'er my chasten'd heart ;
 Let me with diseases sicken,
 And be pierced by sorrow's dart ;

If with CHRIST I be partaker
 Of his sufferings here below ;
 Then I'll bless my gracious Maker,
 Then I'll glory in my woe !

Welcome, then, wild surge of sadness !
 Beat upon my heart and prove it !
 Still the buoyant oil of gladness
 Ever floats and shines above it !

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

DAVID'S CONFESSION.

"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord."—[2nd Sam. xii: 10.] First Morning Lesson.

"'T IS true, Oh Prophet of the LORD !

That cruel man am I ;

And in God's holy sight abhorr'd,

I ought indeed to die !

" 'T WAS I who took that cherished lamb —

Thou knowest the tale too well !

'T WAS I who gazed — wretch as I am !—

And longed — and burned — and fell.

" Oh, deeply, deeply have I err'd !

On GOD I did not call

When with wild passion's tempest stirr'd,

And he has let me fall.

" For I with pride was lifted up,

Because of kingly state ;

GOD filled too full my fortune's cup ;—

It made my heart elate !

" I made my sovereign will my law ;

I did what liked me best,

Nor asked with deep and humble awe

What was his high behest.

“Therefore he left me to my heart —
 Leave me, my God ! no more !
 To show me that its every part
 With sin was spotted o’er !

“And now, though slaves around me spring,
 Obedient to my nod,
 And conquer’d kings their treasures bring,
 And kneeling, kiss the rod !

“Now, though in kingly vestments drest ;—
 (Oh how these trappings lie !)
 I see, though hailed as great and blest,
 How vile a thing am I !

“My regal vestments off I ’ll tear ;—
 I ’ll trample on my crown ;
 To the cold earth I will repair,
 And lay me humbly down.

“There night and day to God I ’ll pray,
 That He will yet forgive ;
 That he will wash my guilt away,
 And that my child may live !’

God hears the contrite sinner’s voice,
 But will not let him win
 (For then ’t would always be his choice)
 His happiness from sin !

Therefore he took the Chastener's part ;
 He struck the sin-born child,
 And the poor father's conscious heart
 Was wrung with anguish wild.

The sword unto his household cleaved,
 And through his own heart ran ;
 And David grew, when thus bereaved,
 An humbler, wiser man !

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.—[Eph. iv: 30.]—
 Epistle for the day.

LOVING Spirit! from the heart
 Still unwilling to depart ;
 Lingering while we bid thee leave,
 May we thee no longer grieve!

Crowded by our passions out—
 Thy voice drown'd in laughter's shout ;
 Driven even from the gate
 By the fiends Remorse and Hate !

Never angry, only grieved
 For the heart of thee bereaved ;
 Ever coming back to see
 If there be a place for thee !

Oh wilt thou the past forgive,
And with us return to live ?
Lovely spirit ! wilt thou yet
Thy blessed seal upon us set ?

Then never more thy love I'll pain,
Or thy strivings quench again ;
Breathe upon my troubled breast —
Make it trustful, calm, and blest.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE MELODY OF THE HEART.

“ Making melody in your heart unto the Lord.”—[Eph. v. 19.]—Epistle for the day.

There is a music soft and low,*
That comes to Fancy's ear ;
Which cruel hearts may never know,
But kind ones hear.

It breathes around us like the moan
Drawn from Æolian chords ;
Familiar as a sister's tone,
A mother's words !

* “ The still soft music of humanity.”—WORDSWORTH.

When human hearts to suffering given,
 In heaven's support believing,
 Bear up, though blighted, wrung and riven :
 There 't is breathing !

Where mothers' o'er their first born bend,
 And with the last long kiss
 One sigh of utter sorrow blend --
 Oh there it is !

In the dim chambers of disease,
 Where love its lone watch keeps,
 Ye hear its mournful melodies --
 The tried one weeps !

And sadly sweet its low moan comes
 From anguished Genius' soul,
 Toiling 'mid sorrow, want and gloom's
 Severe control.

There is a music sweeter yet
 From human hearts than this ;
 Whose tunes by angel voices set,
 All breathe of bliss :

The music of according love,
 Of holy hopes and joys ;
 Whose lute-like breathings swell above
 Sin's clashing noise.

Less mournful and more sweet, it floats
 Up to its place of birth ;
 And none of its calm, heavenly notes,
 Die here on earth :

As part of the unceasing songs
 Which circle round the throne ;
 To heaven's high melodies belongs
 Its humbler tone.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER
 TRINITY.

“ All is well.”—[2d Kings, v. 21.]—1st Morning Lesson.

THOUGH guilt be round our daily path,
 And wreak on innocence its wrath,
 And scatter wide its curses fell,
 Yet God is just, and “ all is well ! ”

Though in distress and pain I lie,
 Steeped in all wo and poverty ;
 Oppressed with griefs no tongue may tell,
 Yet God is kind, and “ all is well ! ”

Though spurned, neglected, hated, left
 Of friends, and name and hope bereft ;

And hopeless woes my bosom swell,
Yet "God is love," and "all is well!"

There's wafted by the self-same wing
The luscious honey with the sting:
In the dark clouds the soft showers dwell;
God pities still, and "all is well!"

There's life prepared for dying dust,
A resurrection of the just;
There is a heaven — there is a hell —
Be still my heart, for "all is well!"

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE GARDEN OF THE LORD.

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness."—[Phil. i: 11.]
—Epistle for the day.

COME let us to the garden go,
And hear its fair flowers preach;
For if we heed their whispers low,
They lovely lessons teach.

Behold their bright innumerable hues!
Their graceful waving see;

And mark how round them they diffuse
A various fragrancy.

And pausing where the woodbines wreathe
A little bower of bliss ;
There bend thine ear and hear them breathe
Some homily like this :

“ Mortal ! thou seest how bright we are —
Our maker’s be the praise ;
What various tints and odors rare,
This garden all displays.

“ The same sun lights us all and warms ;
The same dews on us fall ;
The self-same soil with juice informs,
And feeds our fibres all.

“ Mortal ! why does not thy heart,
When planted with the word,
Forth into various graces start —
The garden of the Lord ?

“ The precious seeds are planted there ;
The suns and dews are given ;
Why doth it not profusely bear
The fruits and flowers of heaven ?

“ Why see we only there and here
A pale and stunted flower,

Lifting its sickly head in fear,
As near its dying hour ?

“ Why are the fruits so poor and spare ?
Why yields the heart no more ?
And why are those which look so fair
All rotten at the core ?

“ There ’s Faith, and Love, and Holiness —
How lovely they would be !
There ’s Peace, and Joy, and Gentleness ;
How fairer far than we !

“ Mortal ! though heaven its smiles may give,
We need incessant care ;
*The spirit’s fruit can only live
By culture and by prayer !*”



TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER
TRINITY.

“ We look for the Saviour the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.—[Phil. iii: 20, 21.]—Epistle for the day.

Vile though our crumbling body be,
The home of every ill ;
Let no man dare despise it ! ’T is
The Spirit’s temple still ;

And though its altar fires be out,
And passion's wild tumultuous rout
Deface the holy fane,
Yet will the blessed Spirit come
And purify it for its home,
And hallow it again !

Let no man dare despise it ! vile
Though it be, by sin accurs'd,
It bask'd 'neath God's approving smile,
Made in his image first.
A form like this the Saviour wore,
A form like this the Saviour bore
Up to the highest heaven ;
There saints and angels round him sing,
And hail him as their Lord and King,
To whom all power is given !

And these vile bodies too shall spring
From out death's loathsome bed,
And soaring up on angel wing,
Like CHRIST's be fashioned.
No longer vile decaying worms,
But bright and glorious spirit forms
Free from disease and pain ;
Pure as the souls within them wrought,
The light-like ministers of thought,
With CHRIST they live and reign.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

REST.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—
[Heb. iv: 9.] "The hope which is laid up for you in heaven:"—
[Col. i: 5.] Epistle for the day.

HAST thou not turned in some dark hour,
When wearied heart and sinking frame,
Confessed the o'ermastering fearful power
Of the dread gloom that hath no name,
And asked "What is it to be blest?"
And heard Hope answer, "'T is to rest?"

Art thou the friendless child of wo,
Whose pallid brow and fragile form
Seem made to waver to and fro,
Like a pale wild flower in the storm?
Then all thy yearning hopes attest,
That to be happy is to rest.

Not sluggish rest, not senseless sleep,
A void unfilled by woe or bliss;
But such repose as angels keep,
Rich with its keen felicities,
Where all the depth of action's zest
Is lent to all the calm of rest.

Rest for the tired and stricken soul ;
Rest for the worn and shatter'd clay !
Rest by the banks where freshly roll
Life's gladsome waters far away,
Through vistas green, where, calm and blest,
The radiant hosts of angels rest.

The rest of faith now turned to sight ;
The rest of hope fruition made ;
Love's deep repose, so calm, so bright ;
And rapture's self in slumber laid.
Oh ! are we not supremely blest,
That we may hope for such a rest ?

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER
TRINITY.

"The Lord our righteousness."—[Jer. xxiii: 6.] Portion of scripture appointed for the Epistle.

OH GOD of love ! my soul doth burn
To render thee love's warm return ;
My full heart's gushing thanks express
And praise "the LORD my righteousness."

Prostrate in conscious guilt and fear,
Thy throne I would not dare draw near,
Nor tell thee of my soul's distress,
But through "the LORD my righteousness."

Safely beneath that shield I dwell,
Nor fear the wrath of heaven or hell,
But close within the shelter press
Of him who is "my righteousness."

Now, like an erring, trustful child,
I haste to tell my wanderings wild,
And, pardoned, share his warm caress,
Who is "the LORD my righteousness."

He points me to the narrow way,
He guides me when my footsteps stray ;—
Oh ! I should be than nothing less
Without "the LORD my righteousness."

My soul's salvation 's all from him ;
He guides me through life's labyrinths dim,
Then clothes me in my marriage dress,
And makes his own "my righteousness !"

Then rise, my soul, on rapture's wing,
And grateful love's loud anthem sing,
Oh fear not gratitude's excess,
But shout "THE LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Oh, let the soul's powers all unite
To praise him — praise him in the height !
Oh, let my heart forever bless
"THE LORD—THE LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS !"

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

JANUARY 25TH.

ST. PAUL, originally called SAUL, was a native of Tarsus, of the tribe of Benjamin, and by sect a Pharisee. He was a Roman citizen,* because the Emperor Augustus had given the freedom of Rome to the freemen of Tarsus in consequence of their firm adherance to his interests. He was sent to Jerusalem, where he studied the law at the feet of the eminent Gamaliel.† He was by trade a tent-maker; agreeably to the custom of the Jews, who considered it a disgrace not to bring up their children to some useful trade, both as security against idleness and a resource against poverty. He was very zealous for the strict observation of the law of Moses. When the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, was stoned, Saul was not only “consenting to his death,” but he even stood by and took care of the clothes of those who stoned him.‡ During the persecution which followed the death of St. Stephen, he was one of the most violent persecutors of our LORD’s disciples. It was while he was on his way to Damascus, charged with power from the High Priest to bring all the Christians, whom he might find,

* Acts xxii: 27.

† Acts xxii: 3.

‡ Acts vii: 58, 59.

bound to Jerusalem, that the memorable conversion which this festival commemorates, occurred.*

The conversion of St. Paul is commemorated, rather than his death, because it was so wonderful in itself, and so highly beneficial to the church of Christ. Although he was not of the number of the twelve, yet for his extraordinary eminence in the ministry, he was called an Apostle; and while others had but the charge of particular provinces, he had the "care of all the churches."

WITH flashing eye and mein elate,
 'The Jewish bigot came,
 Breathing out slaughter, threatenings, hate,
 Against the Christian name.
 Within his heart wild vengeance feeds
 Upon the Christian's woe;
 Already there the victim bleeds,
 And there the faggots glow.

But suddenly a dazzling blaze
 Gushes across his path,
 With light far keener than the day's —
 Is it in love or wrath?
 In *wrath* — his conscious heart might deem,
 Beneath fear's wild control,

* Acts ix.

And all the rays around him, seem
Like arrows for his soul.

But as he lay upon the ground
A voice stole on his ear,
So full of love's reproachful sound,
It banished every fear.
It bowed and touched that proud one's heart ;
He heard and felt the call ;
And he who played the bigot's part
Became the holy Paul.

So o'er the haughty sinner's way,
As on he rides elate,
Yielding to passion's angry sway —
Pride, bitterness, and hate —
Oft times God's holiness and power
With vivid light appear,
And make his guilty spirit cower
'Neath wild remorseful fear.

Blinded and awed he prostrate falls,
Expecting wrath alone ;
But oh ! the blessed JESUS calls
In mercy's sweetest tone.
Though darkly he be led awhile,
Soon does his blindness cease —
His heart rests 'neath the spirit's smile,
And all is love and peace.

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

FEBRUARY 2.

THE Church this day celebrates the presentation of CHRIST in the Temple, commonly called the Purification of St. Mary the virgin.

By the Jewish law of purification, all the women were obliged to separate themselves from the congregation forty days after the birth of a male child, and eighty days after the birth of a female. When the days of their purifying were fulfilled, if they were rich they brought a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering. If they were poor, they brought two turtle doves or two young pigeons for an offering.* Joseph and Mary presented the offering of the poor.

SURELY the angels came and looked,
And on each other smiled,
To see within the temple walls
That mother and her child.

They knew that in that infant face,
E'er long there would be pour'd

The full divinity and power
Of their Almighty LORD.

Meek mother ! with thine offering meet,
Thy child to GOD is given ;
Thou dost not dream that thy poor rite
Arrests the gaze of heaven.

Meek mother ! how the fond heart loves
Hither to turn and see
Joseph and thee — the child — the doves :
A group of purity !

As thou didst bear him in thy arms,
He 'll bear thee up in his :
Pleading his sacrifice and death,
He will secure thy bliss.

ST. MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE.

FEBRUARY 24.

ST. MATTHIAS was not among the Apostles first chosen ; but when the traitor Judas, stricken with remorse, killed himself, Matthias was chosen in his place.* He was probably one of the seventy. According to St. Jerome, he first devoted his min-

* Acts i.

isterial labor to Judea, and afterwards travelled to the countries eastward ; where, after much suffering and many labors, he won the crown of martyrdom.

The Epistle records the fall of Judas and the election of Matthias.

LORD, guard thy holy spouse, the Church,
From every taint of sin ;
Nor let a traitor Judas come
Her altar rails within !

Give to thy ministering servants zeal
To spend for thee their breath ;
And, like Matthias, take their cross
And follow thee to death.

Oh give to them thine ardent love —
Thy patience meek and mild ;
Thy faith triumphant o'er the pangs
Of anguish keen and wild.

Give them, like thee, apart to kneel
Upon the mount of prayer,
And so come strengthened in the world
To labor and to bear !

THE ANNUNCIATION.

MARCH 25.

By "the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary" is meant the declaration which the angel Gabriel made to Mary, that she should become, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, the mother of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.* This is the event which the Church this day commemorates.

"HAIL, Mary"! thus an angel spake —
And shall not mortals raise,
To her whom heaven thus highly blest,
Adoring prayer and praise ?

Blest mother ! shall we offer thee
Our warm but human love ?
Or shall we hail thee as we hail
The Omnipotent above ?

"Oh no !" methinks I hear thee now,
With hands across thy breast,
In lowly loveliness exclaim,
"Call me of women blest !"

Mother blest ! we give not thee
Prayers which are God's alone ;

* St. Luke i: 26.

For though in heaven, thou canst but sit
Near and not *on* the throne.

But we will throw around thee still
Rich loveliness and grace ;
And bear forever on our hearts
Thy meek and angel face !

ST. MARK'S DAY.

APRIL 25.

ST. MARK, though bearing a Roman name, was born of Jewish parents, originally descended of the tribe of Levi. He was probably converted by St. Peter, whose companion he was in all his travels, supplying the place of an amanuensis, or interpreter. As Christian assemblies in those days were made up of men of different nations, when the apostle addressed them in a language intelligible to the larger number, it was necessary that some one should interpret what was said to others who could not otherwise understand it.

St. Mark was sent by St. Peter into Egypt to Alexandria, where his ministry was eminently successful. Afterwards he went to Lybia and other countries, the barbarous inhabitants of which he converted to the Christian faith by his preaching

and miracles. On his return to Alexandria, he organized the Church by appointing its officers and governors.

While St. Mark was celebrating divine service at the festival of Easter, he was seized by the people, who were enraged at his opposition to their idolatry and dragged through the streets on the ground to prison. Early the next morning they came again, and so tore off his flesh by dragging him on the ground, that he expired.

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."—[Jno. 14:4.]—
Epistle for the day.

You may bind a branch to the living tree —

You may tie it fast and strong ;

And though the roots well watered be,

Yet the branch will fade ere long.

It draws no sap from the feeding root —

It heeds not the breath of spring —

Its leaves bud not, and it bears no fruit :

'T is a dead and worthless thing !

It needs to be grafted on and in,

To open its secret pores ;

And lay them close 'neath the bark, to win

Of the circling juices' stores.

Then it will live with the parent tree,

And its leaves inhale the air,

And covered in spring with blossoms be,
And fruits in the autumn bear !

And so may a man unto CHRIST be joined,
Who abideth not in him
By communion sweet of the heart and mind,
Just like the withered limb ;
For fast though he be to the body tied,
And unto the church doth cling :
Yet because he doth not in Christ abide,
He 's a dead and worthless thing !

Oh the heart must close to the Saviour lay,
And open its every pore ;
That his living grace may come and stray
Its minutest windings o'er.
Thus joined to the true and the living vine—
In fellowship full and free —
The branch shall bloom with fruit divine,
And never shall withered be !

ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES' DAY.

MAY 1.

ST. PHILIP the Apostle was a native of Bethsaida.* He was the first who was called to be a disciple of our blessed Saviour, and was his constant follower and companion. He introduced Nathaniel,† a person of great eminence, to the knowledge of the Messiah. He is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia.

ST. JAMES, the less, surnamed the brother of our LORD, was the son of Cleopas, otherwise Alpheus, and Mary, sister of the blessed virgin: consequently he was cousin-german to JESUS CHRIST. He was called the less, either in reference to his stature or his age, to distinguish him from James the greater, the son of Zebedee. He was also surnamed the Just, from the admirable holiness and purity of his life. He was chosen the Bishop of Jerusalem, and was particularly active at the council of Jerusalem in the controversy concerning the obligations of the Jewish ceremonials; for though the case was opened by St. Peter, and discussed by St. Paul, yet the final decree was pronounced by St. James.‡

The scribes and Pharisees, headed by Ananias,

* Jno. i: 45.

† Jno. i: 45.

‡ Acts xv.

the son of Annas, the high priest, threw him down from a gallery of the temple, whence he was addressing the people on the Feast of the Passover. He was not immediately killed by the fall, but recovered sufficient strength to get upon his knees and implore the divine mercy for his murderous persecutors. While he was there praying for them, they loaded him with a shower of stones, and at last beat out his brains.

“Knowing this that the trial of your faith worketh patience ; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”—[James i: 3, 4.]—Epistle for the day.

So spake the humble James the Just —

Fit kinsman of the Lord ;

Whose holy life displayed the trust

So sweetly shown in word.

It seems like loving message sent,

A brother's heart to cheer,

'Neath doubt and sorrow's burden bent,

And tremulous with fear.

A kind rebuke, like Christ's, it seems

T' impatient Philip given ;

Who sought the fountain in the streams,

And looked on earth for heaven.*

* Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us.—[St. John xiv: 9.]

And in them both, meek patience wrought
 Her full and perfect work ;
 So that no doubt's disturbing thought
 Could in their spirit's lurk.

Patiently they toiled and prayed —
 In patience up and down
 Through scoffing multitudes they strayed,
 And won their martyr crown.

Patience ! loveliest plant that springs
 Out of the heart renew'd ;
 Strongest when the tempest's wings
 Flap round it wild and rude :

Faith is thy deep and clinging root —
 Hope is thy hardy flower ;
 And Love thy rich perennial fruit —
 A fair and fragrant dower !

The root whose plant is *patience* here,
 Shall, when from earth 't is riven,
 Transplanted to a brighter sphere,
 Yield *perfect bliss* in heaven !

ST. BARNABAS.

JUNE 11.

ST. BARNABAS was a native of the isle of Cyprus, and was descended of the tribe of Levi.* His parents were rich and pious and sent him to Jerusalem, where he was brought up with Paul at the feet of Gamaliel. Five years afterwards the church of Jerusalem sent him to Antioch, where he beheld the wonders of the grace of God, and exhorted the faithful to perseverance.† Some time afterwards he went to Tarsus to seek Paul and bring him to Antioch, where they dwelt together two years and converted great numbers; and here the disciples were first called Christians.‡ They carried a charitable supply from the Christians of Antioch to relieve the brethren of Judea, who were reduced to necessity by a famine.§ They were afterward set apart to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. After three years' absence they returned to Antioch. Having proposed to visit the churches which they had planted in Asia, St. Paul refused to take Mark, the kinsman of Barnabas, along with them, because in their former travels he had left them at Pamphylia. The contention was so sharp between them that they parted. St. Paul, with Silas, went to the

* Acts iv: 36. † Acts xi: 22, 23. ‡ Acts xi: 26. § Acts ix: 30.

churches of Syria and Cilicia ; and St. Barnabas, with Mark, to Cyprus his own country.* It is uncertain what became of him after he separated from St. Paul and went to Cyprus. It is supposed that he suffered Martyrdom at Salamis, where it is said he was stoned by the Jews.

“ For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith ; and much people were added unto the LORD.”—[Acts ix: 24] Portion of scripture appropriated for the Epistle.

WE know that thou canst work, oh Lord,
By evil or by good ;
And wing with power thy word, proclaim'd
By wicked lips or rude.

Yet dost thou touch with hallow'd fire
The lips that speak thy word ;
And bid them to be clean who bear
The vessels of the Lord.

And still, as on this sacred page,
These close-linked truths we find,
That where the good man is, most souls
Unto the LORD are joined.

Oh make thy ministering servants, Lord,
This solemn truth to feel ;
That they may seek by fervent prayer
More love, more faith, more zeal !

* Acts xv: 39.

ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY.

THE birth of John Baptist was foretold by an angel when his mother Elizabeth was barren and both his parents "well stricken in years." His birth was the occasion of great joy to all who expected the Messiah, of whom he was the forerunner.

His whole ministry tended to prepare the way for the reception of our Saviour and his doctrines, and he proved himself truly what he was styled by Malachi, the "Messenger that was to prepare the way of the LORD."

'T WAS like a trumpet's rousing note,
When through the desert sent
The Baptist's warning cry was still
"Repent! repent! repent!"

His was no mild and gentle task ;
He came to clear the path ;
Rude in his garb and life, he spake
The startling words of wrath.

Against the Pharisees he hurled
Commissioned bolts of ire,
And told them of the wrath to come,
And the undying fire.

In his deep tones were heard the last,
Long echoes of the law,
Whose thunder peals from Sinai's top
Filled Israel's host with awe.

Thus sweeter seemed the contrast, when
Those stern, harsh notes were hushed,
And forth the Gospel's cheering tones
In silvery music gushed!

ST. PETER'S DAY.

JUNE 29.

ST. PETER was born in Bethsaida, a city of Galilee. His father Jonah was a fisherman, and Andrew, the first disciple of the Lord, his brother. St. Peter's name was originally Simon or Simeon, but was changed by CHRIST unto that of Cephas, which in the Syrian language signifies a *stone* or *rock**: from this is derived the word Peter, which in the Greek has the same signification.

St. Peter was an eminent and fervent disciple of the Lord. His warm and impetuous temper is seen in all his history, and particularly in his zealous professions to his Master, that though all others should forsake, he would never forsake or deny him.

* St. John i: 42, 43.

At the first preaching of St. Peter after the descent of the Holy Ghost, three thousand souls were converted.* His first mission was to Samaria, where he was sent out to confirm those whom Philip the Deacon had converted, and to communicate to them by prayer and the imposition of hands the Holy Ghost. Soon after, his national prejudices were removed by a special vision, and he became convinced that God was no "respector of persons." The rest of his life was zealously devoted to the service of his master.

St. Peter suffered martyrdom about the year sixty-nine, under Nero. The manner of his death was by crucifixion with his head downwards.

ST. PETER IN PRISON.

Acts 12. Portion of scripture appointed for the Epistle for the day.

THEY chained him down and a watch they set,
And close at his side they kept ;
And their armor gleamed in his eyes, and yet
The wearied Apostle slept.
His heart was calm, for he knew beneath
Was the everlasting arm ;
And though they might put the body to death,
They could do the soul no harm.

* Acts ii: 41.

But lo ! a sudden and brilliant light
Is flashing across the gloom ;
And as on its wings an angel bright
Comes floating within the room,
He smites the sleeper upon his side,
And bids him arise and flee ;
And on thro' the guards and wards they glide,
And Peter 's alone and free !

Oh many a chained-down spirit sleeps
In the prison house of sin,
And the foe keen guard and vigil keeps,
And strives to retain him in ;
But if God will send his spirit's power,
Then off his chains will drop,
And the baffled guard shall shrink and cower,
And none shall his progress stop.

ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE.

JULY 25.

ST. JAMES, surnamed Major, the elder or the greater, to distinguish him from James the less, was brother to St. John the Evangelist, and son of Zebedee and Salome.* He was of Bethsaida of Gal-

* Mat. iv: 21.

lilee, and left his property to follow CHRIST. Our Saviour surnamed St. James and St. John, *Boanerges*, sons of thunder, probably in reference to their impressive preaching. Their mother, perhaps at the instance of her sons, who at the time erroneously supposed that their master was to be a temporal prince, requested that her two sons might sit the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom.

The martyrdom of St. James is related in Acts ii: 12.

“ Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children, with her sons, worshipping him and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou ? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy kingdom. But JESUS answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask.”—[St. Mat. xx. 20, 21, 22.]

A BETTER lesson thou didst learn,
Apostle meek and great,
Than for an earthly boon to burn,
For pomp and power and state.
Thou learnedst thy Saviour’s cup to drink,
His baptism to share ;
And didst not from the trial shrink,
Though terrible to bear !

Thy aim was glory still — but such
As the blest ones await,

Whose souls humility's mild touch
Fits to be truly great.
It was when stooping humbly down,
That angels caught thee up,
And placed upon thy head the crown,
When draining sorrow's cup.

Oh every wo that wrings the heart
With anguish and with gloom,
Doth unto faith's weak wing impart
A strong and lovely plume ;
And he who in the vile dust sits,
Whom all that pass contemn,
While there but polishes and fits
Jewels for his diadem !

ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

JUNE 24.

THE evangelical history takes very little notice of this Apostle beyond the mention of his name. It is thought that he is the person called Nathaniel. It is generally believed that he preached the gospel in the Indies, and that he carried thither the gospel of St. Matthew, which, as Eusebius testifies, was reported by tradition to have been left by him.

It is related that St. Bartholomew was flayed alive by the Governor of Armenia, for endeavoring to reclaim the people from idolatry, and that he was crucified with his head downwards.

“And JESUS saw Nathaniel coming to him and saith of him Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”—[St. John i: 47.]

Not as the chosen child of fame
Dost thou our love engage,
For seldom is thy humble name
Seen on the sacred page.
And those there are unknown—obscure,
But to the Saviour dear,
Because their humble hearts are pure,
Ingenuous and clear.
Better than all which fame imparts,
If JESUS will but smile ;
And say of our poor erring hearts,
That they are free from guile.

ST. MATTHEW.

SEPTEMBER 21.

ST. MATTHEW, an Apostle and Evangelist, was a Gallilean by birth, a Jew by religion, and a publican by profession.* His occupation, which was originally considered honorable, had become odious

* St. Luke v: 27.

from the extortions practised by those who held it. His ordinary residence was Capernaum, and his occupation at the sea of Tiberias, which was near. He was there when called by JESUS CHRIST to follow him. He immediately left his gainful employment for the service of the humble Saviour.

St. Matthew continued with the rest of the Saviour's disciples until his Ascension, and then for about eight years he preached in Judea. Afterwards he travelled into Parthia and Ethiopia, where he converted multitudes to Christianity. It is most probable that he suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, though the manner of his death is unknown.

COLLECT FOR THE DAY.

ALMIGHTY God, who by thy Son
Didst Matthew from his treasure call,
To be thy meek evangelist,
And leave his worldly prospects all.

Oh give us also grace to leave
All vile and covetous desires,
That we may quench within our hearts
The lust of wealth's consuming fires.

Oh give to us thy heavenly grace,
True followers of thy Son to be,
Who with the Holy Ghost, one God,
Forever lives and reigns with thee.

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

SEPTEMBER 29.

THE scriptures inform us that ST. MICHAEL was an arch-angel, who presided over the Jewish nation*; that he had an army of angels under his command, with whom he fought with Satan and his angels,† and that contending with Satan he disputed about the body of Moses.‡

"There was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not."—[Rev. xii: 7, 8.] Epistle for the day.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven."—[St. Mat. xviii: 10.] Gospel for the day.

GREAT leader of the hosts of heaven!

Who standest near the throne on high,

By thee the rebel crew were driven

In "hideous ruin" from the sky.

The Church on earth shall shout aloud,

Responsive to the Church above,

"Rebellion's haughty head is bow'd

And conquer'd by redeeming love!" §

* Dan. x: 13.

† Jude ix.

‡ Rev. xii: 7.

§ Rev. xii: 11.

And brightly glorious are the ranks
That with thee round the God-head press,
Ascribing unto him all thanks,
Praise, Majesty, Almightyness !

Most glorious by their might of soul —
Glorious in mien and sheen and shape —
Sweet melodies around them roll,
And starry robes their bright forms drape.

It seems employment meet for them
Around their maker's throne to cling —
Bright jewels in the diadem
Of their ador'd, Almighty king !

It well beseemed their lofty state
To issue forth to battle high,
And crush the Dragon's power elate,
And hurl him headlong through the sky.*

But will they deign to look on us,
Poor sons of sin, and death, and wo,

* Hurl'd headlong flaming through the etherial sky
In hideous ruin and combustion.—MILTON.

And leave their mansions glorious,
To visit us vile worms below ?

Oh not a blessed seraph there,
But loves to bend him down, and see,
And watch, and guard with kindest care,
Lost, wandering, weak humanity !

But chiefly they encamp around
The dwellings of the meek and just —
Those humble souls, forever found
Living on CHRIST in lowly trust.

Circling about the faithful heart,
They drive away assaulting sin ;
And while themselves calm peace impart,
Admit no jarring spirits in.

With healing balms they gently steal
Within the heart which sorrow wrings,
And the hot sufferer can feel
The fanning of their soothing wings.

Oh surely ours should be a love
Like that which heavenly bosoms stir,
Since there are sent us from above
Angels for daily ministers !

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST.

OCTOBER 18.

St. LUKE was a Syrian, a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician. Some suppose that it is he who is mentioned in Romans xvi: 21., by the name of Lucius—in that case he was a kinsman of St. Paul. He was the companion of St. Paul in several journeys, when he went about preaching the gospel. He was probably converted by St. Paul at Antioch, who entertained great affection for him, calling him the “beloved physician,” and the brother “whose praise is in the gospel.” He went with St. Paul to Rome, where he attended him in his sickness. His subsequent career and the manner of his death are uncertain.

AN honor'd name, and lov'd, is thine,
That GOD hath through thee given,
Dripping with dews of love divine,
Thy gospel fresh from heaven.

There mercy's sweetest accents fall ;
There anthems take their wing ;

There the returning prodigal
Receives his robe and ring! *
And honor'd still thy name shall be
For words so sweetly given ;
And ransom'd souls shall crowd round thee,
And bless thee when in heaven !

ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE.

OCTOBER 28.

ST. SIMON the Apostle, was born, as some suppose, in Cana of Gallilee ; for which reason they conclude he was surnamed the Cananite : others derive the name from *Kanah* ; which signifies the *Zealot*. This appellation was given him, either on account of his great zeal for the Christian faith or from a particular sect among the Jews, called Zealots. St. Simon, after preaching the gospel in Egypt and Africa, at last suffered martyrdom.

St. Jude, the Apostle, is reckoned among the number of the brethren of our LORD, being, as is believed, a son of Mary, sister of the Virgin, and a

* It is observed by Keble, that the Christian hymns, the Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimitis, are all in St. Luke ; and that his gospel most abounds in such passages as display God's mercy to penitent sinners. [Keble's Christian Year, p. 356.]

brother of James the less, Bishop of Jerusalem. It is most probable that he preached in Judea, Galilee, and the neighboring countries, and at last suffered martyrdom in Persia. St. Jude was called also Lebbeus and Thaddeus.

"Simon, called Zelotes — (the zealous.)"—Luke vi: 15. "Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus."—Mat. x: 3.

OH warm, devoted men were ye,
And zealous for your Lord —
Dispensing wide with fervency,
The pure life-giving word!

Ye must have felt what thus ye preached,
And your soul kindled darts,
Winged with the spirit's power, have reached
And pierced the hearers' hearts!

Your various names* the truth attest
That ye were filled with zeal —
Men that could neither pause nor rest
Till ye made others feel.

Fond history loves the tale to tell
That ye together strove;

* ZELOTES, the zealous; LEBBEUS, the man of heart; THADDEUS, a man zealous in praising God.

Together bade this world farewell,
Together rose above.*

As to your names together joined
The Church hath honor given,
So your warm hearts we still may find
Together linked in heaven !

ALL SAINTS' DAY.

NOVEMBER 21.

THE Church has set apart a day for the commemoration of those eminent Christians who have fought the good fight of faith, and who have been remarkably distinguished for their devotion to God and his Church. She celebrates on this day the virtues of those Saints who are militant here on earth, as well as the memories of the Saints triumphant in heaven. The Church designs by this festival to encourage us while here below "to run with patience the race that is set before us," seeing "we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses."

* "There is a tradition that they labored and suffered martyrdom together."—Editor's note to Keble's *Christian Year*, p.358.

WITH garments crimson from the strife,
JESUS ascends on high :
He has wrung from death immortal life,
He has won the victory !

His ransomed saints with shoutings rise,
With him to live and reign ;
And far in the depths of the open'd skies
Files on the flashing train !

That countless train extends beneath,
Though a slight break is seen —
Made by the stream of dividing death,
With its billows black between !

But all are one in heart and love,
And on one Saviour call ;
To the saints below and saints above,
CHRIST JESUS is all in all.

Then hail to Him who from the strife
In glory goes on high :
He hath wrung from death immortal life —
He hath won the victory !

THE CHURCH.

I LOVE her sacred courts to tread —
The Church — the Church of God ;
And linger with a solemn awe
Where martyr steps have trod.
Around her old and hoary towers,
Defying time's corroding powers,
I seem a glorious light to trace —
Like that which gleamed from Moses' face —
And hear amid its arches dim
The low-breathed praise of Seraphim.

I love her, for that CHRIST himself
Hath laid her corner stone —
Apostles, prophets, holy men,
Have builded thereupon.
That when o'er earth corruption walked,
And Sin and Death — grim tyrants — stalked,

And wailings, curses, crimes and wo
Pre-figured Hell's domain below ;
Within her peaceful walls were given
A type and antepast of heaven.

I love her, for that holy hearts
Were in her service spent,
And the high powers of intellect
To do her honor bent.
For all who in her cause have died,
Were stoned, tormented, crucified ;
From him, who strong in trusting faith,
Consigned his soul to CHRIST in death,*
To that now bright angelic choir, †
Whose souls reached heaven on wings of fire.

I love her for her long array
Of mighty minds and sage ;
Whose sacred lore poured floods of light
Upon a groping age ;
Of men whose calm rebuke could frown
Corruption's wretched treacheries down,
And check the mad infuriate zeal
Weak souls just loosed from fetters feel,
And by their holy lives attest
The solemn truths their lips profest.

* The martyr Stephen.

† The martyrs of the Reformation.

I love her for her solemn words
Of fervent prayer and praise,
Breathed from the lips of martyr saints
In better, holier days !
For then when death's sword o'er their head
Hung trembling by a single thread,
The spirit clung with love intense
Unto the thron'd Omnipotence ;
And from the heart devotion gushed,
As waters from the touched rock rushed !

I love her for her holy times —
Her seemly rites and forms,
Standing in beauty 'mid the rush
Of wild fanatic storms.
The soul borne on her circling days,
Through prayer and penitence and praise ;
Now in the dust most humbly bow'd —
Now lifting anthems free and loud —
Finds utterance for her every mood
Of sorrow, faith and gratitude !

For things like these I bless thee,
The Church — the Church of God !
The ark on death's all-flooding wave,
And safety's sole abode.

Within thy walls sit smiling peace,
And prosperous be thy palaces ;
And on thy towers benignant shine,
The approving light of love divine,
Till with the Church above thou 'rt blent
On earth no longer militant !

THE END.



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